

Philip Schaff

The
Reunion of Christendom

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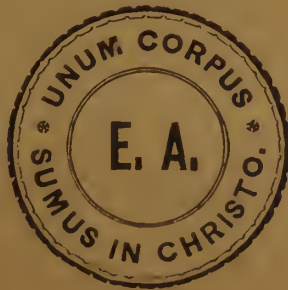
THE
REUNION OF CHRISTENDOM

A Paper

PREPARED FOR THE PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS AND THE
NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE
HELD IN CHICAGO, SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER, 1893

BY

PHILIP SCHAFF, D. D., LL. D.



EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE OFFICE:
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THE REUNION OF CHRISTENDOM.

“Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me.”—JOHN 17:20, 21.

THE DIFFICULTY OF THE PROBLEM.

“With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

This answer of our Saviour to the question of his disciples “Who can be saved?” may well be applied to the question, “How shall the many sections of the Christian world be united?”

When St. Paul entered the eternal city as an obscure prisoner, chained to a rude heathen soldier, no philosopher or historian could have foreseen the conversion of the Roman empire to the religion of Jesus of Nazareth; and yet in less than three hundred years the crowned successor of Nero appeared, as a worshiper of Christ, among the bishops of the Council of Nicea, and the symbol of shame and defeat had become the symbol of glory and victory.

When Augustin, an humble monk, baptized the painted Anglo-Saxon savages of Kent, he did not dream that he was laying the foundation of Christian England with its missions encircling the globe.

Columbus died in the belief that he had discovered, not a continent, but merely a western passage to the East Indies;

and Pope Alexander VI., in the exercise of his authority as the arbiter of Christendom, divided the New World between Catholic Spain and Portugal; but Providence intended to give the control of North America to the Anglo-Saxon race and to make it a home of religious freedom and progress.

“Deus habet suas horas et moras.” A thousand years are with God as one day, and he may accomplish in one day the work of a thousand years. Sooner or later, in his own good time, and in a manner far better than we can devise or hope, he will, by the power of his Spirit, unite all his children into one flock under one Shepherd.

THE EXISTING UNITY.

The reunion of Christendom presupposes an original union which has been marred and obstructed, but never entirely destroyed. The theocracy of the Jewish dispensation continued during the division of the kingdom and during the Babylonian exile. Even in the darkest time, when Elijah thought that Israel was wholly given to idolatry, there were seven thousand—known only to God—who had never bowed their knees to Baal. The Church of Christ has been one from the beginning, and he has pledged to her his unbroken presence “all the days to the end of the world.” The one invisible Church is the soul which animates the divided visible Churches. All true believers are members of the mystical body of Christ.

“The saints in heaven and on earth
But one communion make:
All join in Christ, their living Head,
And of his grace partake.”

Let us briefly mention the prominent points of unity which underlies all divisions.

Christians differ in dogmas and theology, but agree in the fundamental articles of faith which are necessary to salva-

tion: they believe in the same Father in heaven, the same Lord and Saviour, and the same Holy Spirit, and can join in every clause of the Apostles' Creed, of the *Gloria in Excelsis*, and the *Te Deum*.

They are divided in church government and discipline, but all acknowledge and obey Christ as the Head of the Church and chief Shepherd of our souls.

They differ widely in modes of worship, rites and ceremonies, but they worship the same God manifested in Christ, they surround the same throne of grace, they offer from day to day the same petitions which the Lord has taught them, and can sing the same classical hymns, whether written by Catholic or Protestant, Greek or Roman, Lutheran or Reformed, Calvinist or Methodist, Episcopalian or Presbyterian, Pædo-Baptist or Baptist. Some of the best hymn-writers—as Toplady and Charles Wesley—were antagonistic in theology; yet their hymns, “Rock of Ages,” and “Jesus, Lover of my soul,” are sung with equal fervor by Calvinists and Methodists. Newman’s “Lead, kindly Light,” will remain a favorite hymn among Protestants, although the author left the Church of England and became a cardinal of the Church of Rome. “In the Cross of Christ I glory,” and “Nearer, my God, to Thee,” were written by devout Unitarians, yet have an honored place in every trinitarian hymnal.

There is a unity of Christian scholarship of all creeds, which aims at the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. This unity has been strikingly illustrated in the Anglo-American Revision of the Authorized Version of the Scriptures, in which about one hundred British and American scholars—Episcopalians, Independents, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Friends, and Unitarians, have harmoniously coöperated for fourteen years (from 1870 to 1884). It was my privilege to attend almost every meeting of the American Revisers in the

Bible House at New York, and several meetings of the British Revisers in the Jerusalem Chamber of Westminster Abbey; and I can testify that, notwithstanding the positive convictions of the scholars of the different communions, no sectarian issue was ever raised; all being bent upon the sole purpose of giving the most faithful idiomatic rendering of the original Hebrew and Greek. The English Version, in its new as well as its old form, will continue to be the strongest bond of union among the different sections of English-speaking Christendom—a fact of incalculable importance for private devotion and public worship.

Formerly, exegetical and historical studies were too much controlled by, and made subservient to, apologetic and polemic ends; but now they are more and more carried on without prejudice, and with the sole object of ascertaining the meaning of the text and the facts of history upon which creeds must be built.

Finally, we must not overlook the ethical unity of Christendom, which is much stronger than its dogmatic unity and has never been seriously shaken. The Greek, the Latin, and the Protestant Churches, alike, accept the Ten Commandments as explained by Christ, or the law of supreme love to God and love to our neighbor, as the sum and substance of the Law, and they look up to the teaching and example of our Saviour as the purest and most perfect model for universal imitation.

THE DIVISIONS OF CHRISTENDOM.

The unity and harmony of the Christian Church were threatened and disturbed from the beginning, partly by legitimate controversy, which is inseparable from progress, partly by ecclesiastical domination and intolerance, partly by the spirit of pride, selfishness and narrowness which tends to create

heresy and schism. Hence the frequent exhortations of the Apostles to avoid strife and contention, and to "keep the mity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

The Church had hardly existed twenty years when it was brought to the brink of disruption by the question of circumcision as a condition of church-membership and salvation, and would have been split into a Jewish Church and a Gentile Church, had not the wisdom and charity of the Apostles prevented such a calamity at the Council of Jerusalem. Not long afterward the same irritating question produced at Antioch a temporary alienation even between Paul and Peter.

The party spirit which characterized the philosophical schools of Greece, manifested itself in the congregation at Corinth, and created four divisions, calling themselves respectively after Paul, Apollos, Cephas, and Christ (in a sectarian sense). Against this evil the Apostle raised his indignant protest: "Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?" (1 Cor. 1:13.) If it is wrong to give a Church the name of an inspired Apostle, can it be right to call it after an uninspired teacher, though he be as great as Luther or Wesley?

1. Many schisms arose in the early ages before and after the Council of Nicæa. Almost every great controversy resulted in the excommunication of the defeated party, who organized a separate sect, if they were not exterminated by the civil power. The Nestorians, Armenians, Jacobites, and Copts, who seceded from the Orthodox Greek Church, continue to this day as relics of dead controversies. The schism of the Donatists, who were once as numerous and as well organized in North Africa as the Catholics, was extinguished not so much by the arguments of St. Augustin, the last great African, as by the barbarian invasion which overwhelmed both parties in a common ruin.

2. In the ninth century, the great Catholic Church itself was split in two on the doctrinal question of the procession of the Holy Spirit, and the ecclesiastical question of the primacy of the bishop of Rome. The Greek schism lasts to this day and seems as far from being healed as ever. It is even intensified by the two modern dogmas of the Roman Church—the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary, and the infallibility of the pope. It is strange that the Greek and Latin Churches, which agree most in doctrine, worship, and government, should be most antagonistic and irreconcilable in spirit and feeling, so as to defy every attempt at reunion. The Pope of Rome and the Czar at St. Petersburg are the greatest rivals in Christendom. The Sultan still holds the key to the Holy Sepulchre, and Turkish soldiers keep watch to prevent Greek and Latin monks from fighting on the sacred spot in passion week!

In view of this greatest, and yet least justifiable, of all schisms, neither the Greek nor the Latin Church should cast a stone upon the divisions of Protestantism. They all share in the sin and guilt of schism, and should also share in a common repentance.

3. In the sixteenth century, the Latin or Western Church was rent into two hostile camps, the Roman and the Protestant, in consequence of the evangelical reformation and the papal reaction.

Protestantism, again, appeared first in three main divisions: Lutheran, Reformed (Calvinistic), and Anglican. The former two divided the field with the Roman Catholic Church on the Continent, and acquired an equal legal status in Germany after the terrible ordeal of the Thirty Years' War, by the Treaty of Westphalia (1648), in spite of the protest of the pope. In France, the Protestants were given legal toleration by the Edict of Nantes in 1598, which, however, was revoked in 1685. In Holland, the Reformed Church triumphed in the great

struggle for political and religious liberty against Spain. In England and Scotland, the whole nation became Protestant. Southern Europe and the greater part of Ireland remained Roman Catholic.

4. In England, a new era of division dates from the Toleration Act of 1688, which secured to the orthodox dissenters—Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, and Quakers—a limited toleration, while the Episcopal Church remained the established or national religion in England, and the Reformed or Presbyterian Church remained the national religion in Scotland.

The principle of toleration gradually developed into that of religious freedom, and was extended to the Methodists, Unitarians, and Roman Catholics.

Under the reign of freedom, there is no limitation to the multiplication of denominations and sects, and there ought to be none. We cannot have the use of freedom, which is the greatest gift of God, without the risk of its abuse by sinful and erring men.

We find, therefore, the largest number of denominations in England and America where religious freedom is most fully enjoyed; while on the Continent of Europe, especially in Roman Catholic countries, freedom of public worship is denied or abridged, although of late it is making irresistible progress.

5. In the United States, all the creeds and sects of Europe meet on a basis of liberty and equality before the law, and are multiplied by native ingenuity and enterprise.

We are informed by Dr. Carroll, the official editor of the religious statistics of the census of 1890, that there are no less than 143 religious denominations in the United States, besides a number of independent congregations.

This bare statement, it is true, would give a false impression, and must be corrected by the additional statement, on the same authority, that 119 of these denominations fall into 18

groups or families, leaving only 24 which are separate and distinct.

This would make 42 different denominations. Some of these are not Christian, or are very insignificant, and might as well be omitted. But even this reduced number is much too large, and a reproach to the Christian name. For these divisions promote jealousies, antagonisms, and interferences at home and on missionary fields abroad, at the expense of our common Christianity. The evil is beginning to be felt more and more.

The cure must begin where the disease has reached its crisis, and where the Church is most free to act. For the reunion of Christendom, like religion itself, cannot be forced, but must be free and voluntary.

Christian union and Christian freedom are one and inseparable.

NOTE.—The United States census statistics of 1890 count 17 branches of Methodists, 13 branches of Baptists, 12 Lutheran, and 12 Presbyterian organizations, which are separate and independent, yet essentially agree. There are 12 kinds of Mennonites, 4 kinds of Dunkards, 2 kinds of Christians, 4 kinds of Plymouth Brethren, 6 kinds of Adventists, etc. It is remarkable that England, which still has a national Church, should even have a larger number of sects than the United States, namely, 254, according to Whitaker's *Almanack* for 1892, p. 249. But the report of the registrar-general in 1877 numbered only 122.

DIVISION NOT AN UNMIXED EVIL.

Before we discuss reunion, we should acknowledge the hand of Providence in the present divisions of Christendom.

There is a great difference between denominationalism and sectarianism: the first is consistent with Church unity as well as military corps are with the unity of an army, or the many monastic orders with the unity of the papacy; the second is nothing but extended selfishness and bigotry. Denominationalism is a blessing; sectarianism is a curse.

We must remember that denominations are most numerous

in the most advanced and active nations of the world. A stagnant Church is a sterile mother. Dead orthodoxy is as bad as heresy, or even worse. Sects are a sign of life and interest in religion. The most important periods of the Church—the Nicene age, and the age of the Reformation—were full of controversy. There are divisions in the Church which cannot be justified, and there are sects which have fulfilled their mission and ought to cease. But the historic denominations are permanent forces and represent various aspects of the Christian religion which supplement each other.

As the life of our Saviour could not be fully exhibited by one Gospel, nor his doctrine fully set forth by one Apostle, much less could any one Christian body comprehend and manifest the whole fullness of Christ and the entire extent of his mission to mankind.

Every one of the great divisions of the Church has had, and still has, its peculiar mission as to territory, race and nationality, and modes of operation.

The Greek Church is especially adapted to the East, to the Greek and Slavonic peoples; the Roman, to the Latin races of Southern Europe and America; the Protestant, to the Teutonic races of the North and West.

Among the Protestant Churches, again, some have a special gift for the cultivation of Christian science and literature; others for the practical development of the Christian life; some are most successful among the higher, others among the middle, and still others among the lower classes. None of them could be spared without great detriment to the cause of religion and morality, and without leaving its territory and constituency spiritually destitute. Even an imperfect Church is better than no Church.

No schism occurs without guilt on one or on both sides. "It must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by

whom the offense cometh." Yet God overrules the sins and follies of man for his own glory.

The separation of Paul and Barnabas, in consequence of their "sharp contention" concerning Mark, resulted in the enlargement of missionary labor. If Luther had not burned the pope's bull, or had recanted at Worms, we would not have a Lutheran Church, but be still under the spiritual tyranny of the papacy. If Luther had accepted Zwingli's hand of fellowship at Marburg, the Protestant cause would have been stronger at the time, but the full development of the characteristic features of the two principal Churches of the Reformation would have been prevented, or obstructed. If John Wesley had not ordained Coke, we would not have a Methodist Episcopal Church, which is the strongest denomination in the United States. If Chalmers and his friends had not seceded from the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland in 1843, forsaking every comfort for the sake of the sole headship of Christ, we would miss one of the grandest chapters in modern Church history.

All divisions of Christendom will, in the providence of God, be made subservient to a greater harmony. Where the sin of schism has abounded, the grace of future reunion will much more abound.

VARIETY ESSENTIAL TO UNITY.

Taking this view of the divisions of the Church, we must reject the idea of a negative reunion, which would destroy all denominational distinctions and thus undo the work of the past.

History is not like "the baseless fabric of a vision" that leaves "not a rack behind." It is the unfolding of God's plan of infinite wisdom and mercy to mankind. He is the chief actor, and rules and overrules the thoughts and deeds of his

servants. We are told that our heavenly Father has numbered the very hairs of our head, and that not a sparrow fall-eth to the ground without his will. The labors of confessors and martyrs, of missionaries and preachers, of fathers, schoolmen and reformers, and of the countless host of holy men and women of all ranks and conditions who lived for the good of the world, cannot be lost. They constitute a treasure of inestimable value, for all future time. The Apostle encourages his brethren to be "stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," because their "labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58). Whatever is built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ shall stand.

Variety in unity and unity in variety is the law of God in nature, in history, and in his kingdom. Unity without variety is dead uniformity. There is beauty in variety. There is no harmony without many sounds, and a garden incloses all kinds of flowers. God has made no two nations, no two men or women, not even two trees or two flowers, alike. He has endowed every nation, every Church, yea, every individual Christian, with peculiar gifts and graces. His power, his wisdom, and his goodness are reflected in ten thousand forms.

"There are diversities of gifts," says St. Paul, "but the same Spirit. And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord. And there are diversities of workings, but the same God, who worketh all things in all. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal" (1 Cor. 12:4-7).

We must, therefore, expect the greatest variety in the Church of the future. There are good Christians who believe in the ultimate triumph of their own creed, or form of government and worship, but they are all mistaken and indulge in a vain dream. The world will never become wholly Greek, nor wholly Roman, nor wholly Protestant, but it will become wholly Chris-

tian, and will include every type and every aspect, every virtue and every grace of Christianity—an endless variety in harmonious unity, Christ being all in all.

INCLUSIVENESS, NOT EXCLUSIVENESS.

Every denomination which holds to Christ the Head will retain its distinctive peculiarity, and lay it on the altar of reunion, but it will cheerfully recognize the excellencies and merits of the other branches of God's kingdom. No sect has the monopoly of truth. The part is not the whole; the body consists of many members, and all are necessary to each other. Episcopalians will prefer their form of government as the best, but must concede the validity of the non-episcopal ministry.

Baptists, while holding fast to the primitive mode of immersion, must allow pouring or affusion to be legitimate baptism.

Protestants will cease to regard the pope as the Antichrist predicted by St. Paul and St. John, and will acknowledge him as the legitimate head of the Roman Church; while the pope ought to recognize the respective rights and privileges of the Greek patriarchs, and evangelical bishops and pastors.

Those who prefer to worship God in the forms of a stated liturgy, ought not to deny others the equal right of free prayer, as the Spirit moves them. Even the silent worship of the Quakers has Scripture authority; for there was "a silence in heaven for the space of half an hour" (Rev. 8: 1).

Doctrinal differences will be the most difficult to adjust. When two dogmas flatly contradict each other, the one denying what the other asserts, one or the other, or both, must be wrong. Truth excludes error and admits of no compromise.

But truth is many-sided and all-sided, and is reflected in different colors. The creeds of Christendom, as already re-

marked, agree in the essential articles of faith, and their differences refer either to minor points, or represent only various aspects of truth, and supplement one another.

Calvinists and Arminians are both right, the former in maintaining the sovereignty of God, the latter in maintaining the freedom and moral responsibility of man; but they are both wrong, when they deny one or the other of these two truths, which are equally important, although we may not be able to reconcile them satisfactorily. The conflicting theories on the Lord's Supper which have caused the bitterest controversies among mediæval Schoolmen and Protestant Reformers turn, after all, only on the *mode* of Christ's presence; while all admit the essential *fact* that he is spiritually and really present, and partaken of by believers, as the bread of life from heaven. Even the two chief differences between Romanists and Protestants concerning Scripture and tradition, as rules of faith, and concerning faith and good works, as conditions of justification, admit of an adjustment by a better understanding of the nature and relationship of Scripture and tradition, of faith and works. The difference is no greater than that between St. Paul and St. James in their teaching on justification; and yet the Epistles of both stand side by side in the same canon of Holy Scripture.

We must remember that the dogmas of the Church are earthly vessels for heavenly treasures, or imperfect human definitions of divine truths, and may be improved by better statements with the advance of knowledge. Our theological systems are but dim rays of the sun of truth which illuminates the universe. Truth first, doctrine next, dogma last.

“Our little systems have their day;
 They have their day and cease to be;
 They are but broken lights of thee,
 And thou, O Lord, art more than they.”

Every denomination should prepare a short popular and irenic creed of the essential articles which it holds in common with all others; and leave the larger confessions of faith to theologians, whose business it is to investigate the mysteries and solve the problems of faith.

DIFFERENT KINDS OF CHRISTIAN UNION.

The Reformation of the sixteenth century ended in division; the Reformation of the twentieth century will end in reunion. The age of sectarianism is passing away, the age of catholicity is coming on. The progress has begun in earnest. Though many experiments may fail, the cause of union is steadily gaining.

There are three kinds of union: individual, federal, and organic.

1. Individual union is a voluntary association of Christians of different Churches and nationalities for a common purpose.

2. Federal or confederate union is a voluntary association of different Churches in their official capacity, each retaining its freedom and independence in the management of its internal affairs, but all recognizing one another as sisters with equal rights, and coöperating in general enterprises, such as the spread of the gospel at home and abroad, the defense of the faith against infidelity, the elevation of the poor and neglected classes of society, works of philanthropy and charity, and moral reform.

Such an ecclesiastical confederation would resemble the political confederations of Switzerland, the United States, and the modern German Empire. The beauty and strength of these confederate governments lie in the union of the general sovereignty with the intrinsic independence of the several cantons, or states, or kingdoms and duchies.

3. Organic or corporate union of all the Churches under one government. The Roman Catholic Church claims to be the one and the only Church of Christ, governed by his vicar in the Vatican; and undoubtedly she presents the most imposing organization the world has ever seen. The Roman Church goes back in unbroken line to the days of the Apostles; she extends over five continents, and is controlled by an aged, unmarried priest, whose encyclicals command the attention of every reader in Christendom. Proud of her past, she confidently hopes to absorb at no distant time the Greek schism and all the Protestant sects.

But this is an impossibility. The history of the Greek Church and of the Protestant Churches cannot be undone, as little as that of the Roman Church. The last three or four hundred years have done as much, or more, for Christianity and civilization than the Catholic middle ages. Christ needs no vicar: he is the ever-living Head of his Church, present everywhere and at all times. He promised us one *flock* under one shepherd, but not one *fold*. The famous passage, John 10:16, has been mistranslated by the Latin Vulgate, and the error has passed into King James's Version. Christ's flock is one, but there are many folds, and there will be "many mansions in heaven."

We must look, therefore, to a much broader union than that of the papacy, a union which will include the Greek, the Roman Catholic, and the Protestant Churches under the sole headship of Christ.

VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS OF INDIVIDUAL CHRISTIANS.

Protestant Christians of different denominations have associated for common objects in voluntary societies, such as Bible Societies, Tract Societies, Sunday-school Unions, Young Men's

and Young Women's Christian Associations, Evangelical Alliances, and Christian Endeavor Societies. These societies are all of comparatively recent growth, and are doing great service to the cause of Christian union. We mention the two largest and most influential.

1. *The Evangelical Alliance* was founded in London in 1846 by representative men of Europe and America, for the promotion of Christian union and the defense of Christian liberty. It has manifested, on a large scale, the great fact that Christians of different creeds, nationalities, and tongues are one in Christ.

The Alliance has national branches in different countries, but holds from time to time general conferences for the promotion of its objects. These conferences have proved a signal blessing to the countries in which they were held. The first General Conference met in London, 1851, the second in Paris, 1855, the third in Berlin, 1857, the fourth in Geneva, 1861, the fifth in Amsterdam, 1867, the sixth in New York, 1873 (the largest and most enthusiastic of all), the seventh in Basel, 1879, the eighth in Copenhagen, 1884, the ninth in Florence, 1891.*

It is probable that in 1896 all branches of the Alliance will meet in London to celebrate the first semi-centennial of the society, and make a new start on an enlarged scale as a Pan-Christian Alliance.

The Alliance has also done great service in the defense and promotion of religious liberty. It has first proclaimed the principle that Christian union and religious liberty are inseparably connected.

2. *The Christian Endeavor Societies* are scarcely more than a

* I attended, as honorary secretary, the General Conferences at New York, Basel, and Copenhagen, and furnished papers on Christianity in the United States (1857 and 1879), on the Old Catholic Movement (1873), on the Discord and Concord of Christendom (1884), and on the Renaissance and the Reformation (for the conference in Florence, 1891), and edited, with Dr. Prime, the Proceedings of the Conference of 1873.

dozen years old, and have spread with wonderful rapidity from New England over Protestant Christendom. They carry the spirit of union and coöperation into local Churches, and unite young men and women for greater efficiency in prayer and active Christian work.

These societies have likewise assumed an interdenominational and international character. The last general meetings, held in New York, July, 1892, and in Montreal, July, 1893, have surprised the world by the extraordinary enthusiasm and vitality of our rising Christian youth, and are among the most hopeful signs of the times. Even the Roman Catholic Mayor of Montreal heartily welcomed the Convention as "an ally in the battle of belief against unbelief."

The sense of the superiority of the common creed of Christendom over sectarian creeds is strengthened by the best preaching of the day, and by religious periodicals which are undenominational yet thoroughly evangelical, and surpass in circulation and influence many sectarian organs.

CONFEDERATE UNION.

We now pass beyond the union of individuals to the union of Churches. The first step in this direction is the confederation of the several branches of those denominations which profess the same creed (as the Augsburg Confession, or the Heidelberg Catechism, or the Westminster Confession), but differ as to interpretation, or in the rigidity of subscription, or in a number of minor differences of government and discipline, or in methods of church work.

Family feuds are often the most bitter and painful; hence it is more difficult to heal the divisions of different branches of the Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, and other Church families than to unite distinct and separate denominations.

Nevertheless several such attempts have been actually made, with more or less success.

1. *The Alliance of the Reformed Churches*, usually called the "Pan-Presbyterian Alliance," was organized in the English Presbyterian College at London, July, 1875, by representative divines and laymen of Europe and America, most of whom had taken a leading part in the Evangelical Alliance. It embraces the Churches which hold to the consensus of the Reformed confessions of faith and the Presbyterian system of government. Its object is to bring them into closer communion and coöperation in mission fields, and for the support of the weaker branches, as the Waldensians and the Reformed Bohemians. The Alliance does not claim any legislative authority. The doctrinal consensus has not been defined, but it is generally understood to embrace only the fundamental articles of the evangelical faith, which the German Reformed and the semi-Arminian Cumberland Presbyterians hold in common with the high Calvinists.

The Alliance holds from time to time General Councils in different capitals. The first of these Councils met at Edinburgh in 1877, the second at Philadelphia in 1880, the third at Belfast in 1884, the fourth at London in 1888, the fifth at Toronto, Canada, in 1892.* The sixth will meet at Glasgow in 1896. It is to be hoped that Geneva, the common mother of the Reformed Churches, will not be overlooked in selecting a place for future meetings. It may also be expected that the Churches represented in this Alliance will ultimately agree upon a brief popular and irenic consensus creed, which is suggested in the constitution and was discussed at Edinburgh, 1877, and in subsequent Councils.

* I took part, as a delegate, in the formation of the Alliance in 1875, attended all the Councils except the last, and prepared addresses on the Consensus of the Reformed Confessions (1877), and on the Toleration Act of 1688 (for the London Council in 1888).

2. *The Pan-Methodist Conference.* The various branches of the aggressive and progressive Methodist family have followed the example of the Presbyterians and held an enthusiastic international Conference at London, 1881, and a second one at Washington, the capital of the United States, in 1892, where delegates from the Pan-Presbyterian Council of Toronto were kindly received as Christian brethren notwithstanding the doctrinal differences.

3. *The Congregationalists* of England and America held an International Congress at London in 1891, and discussed all the religious questions of the day with great ability.

4. *The Anglican Council* consists of all the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Churches of Great Britain, the British Colonies, and the United States. It has so far held three meetings at Lambeth Palace, London, under the presidency of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the first in 1867, the second in 1878, the third in 1888.

The third council was by far the most important. It was attended by one hundred and forty-five bishops of Great Britain and America, and adopted, with slight modifications, a program for the reunion of Christendom which had been previously proposed by the House of Bishops in the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States at Chicago in 1886.

THE FOUR ANGLICAN ARTICLES OF REUNION.

This Angliean program consists of four articles as "a basis on which approach may be by God's blessing made toward home reunion." The articles are as follows:

"I. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as 'containing all things necessary to salvation,' and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith.

“II. The Apostles’ Creed, as the Baptismal Symbol; and the Nicene Creed, as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith.

“III. The two Sacraments ordained by Christ himself—Baptism and the Supper of the Lord—ministered with the unfailing use of Christ’s words of institution, and of the elements ordained by him.

“IV. The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of his Church.

“This Conference earnestly requests the constituted authorities of the various branches of our communion, acting, as far as may be, in concert with one another, to make it known that they hold themselves in readiness to enter into brotherly conference (such as that which has already been proposed by the Church in the United States of America) with the representatives of other Christian communions in the English-speaking races in order to consider what steps can be taken, either toward corporate reunion, or toward such relations as may prepare the way for fuller organic unity hereafter.”*

This overture looks toward a confederation of all English-speaking Evangelical Churches, and possibly even to an organic union. As it comes from the largest, most conservative, and most churchly of all the Protestant communions, it is entitled to the highest respect and to serious consideration. It commends itself by a remarkable degree of liberality. It says nothing of the Thirty-nine Articles, nor of the Book of Common Prayer, and leaves the confederate Churches free to keep their own confessions of faith and modes of worship. What a difference between this liberality and the narrow policy of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which by legislative acts of conformity would force one creed, one discipline, and one liturgy upon England, Scotland, and Ireland! Instead of the Thirty-nine Articles, the Lambeth Articles, and the Irish Articles, which embody a whole system of divinity, we have but four. The first and the third articles are already agreed upon

* See *The Lambeth Conferences of 1867, 1878, and 1888*; edited by Randall T. Davidson, London, 1889, pp. 280, 281.

by all Protestants. The same may be said of the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed, except that the latter would exclude Unitarian Christians, and that the Western addition of "*Filioque*" would never be accepted by the Oriental Church.

The only serious difficulty is the "historic episcopate." This is the stumbling-block to all non-episcopalians, and will never be conceded by them as a condition of Church unity, if it is understood to mean the necessity of three orders of the ministry and of episcopal ordination in unbroken historic succession. Christ says nothing about bishops any more than about patriarchs and popes, and does not prescribe any particular form of church government. All scholars, including the most learned of the ancient Fathers—as St. Jerome or St. Chrysostom—and of the modern Episcopalians—as Bishop Lightfoot—admit the original identity of bishops and presbyters, as is evident from the New Testament and the post-apostolic writings before the Ignatian Epistles.*

And as to an unbroken episcopal succession, it is of little avail without the more important succession of the spirit and life of Christ, our ever-present Lord and Saviour, who is as near to his people in the nineteenth century as he was in the first. Even where two or three are gathered together in his name, he is in the midst of them. *Ubi Christus, ibi Ecclesia.*

The Church of England recognized in various ways, directly

* The Preface to the Ordinal of the Episcopal Church is not sustained by the facts of history when it affirms that, "it is evident unto all men diligently reading the Holy Scriptures and Ancient Authors, that *from the Apostles' time* there have been these orders of ministers in Christ's Church: Bishops, Priests, and Deacons." The Preface is ascribed to Crammer (1549), but it was altered in 1662. The earliest testimony to the three orders is that of Ignatius of Antioch (after A.D. 107); but he represents the bishop, surrounded by a college of elders and deacons, as the head of a single congregation, not of a diocese. This is congregational episcopacy. Diocesan episcopacy appears toward the end of the second century in the writings of Irenæus and Tertullian.

or indirectly, the validity of Presbyterian ordination, and held communion with Lutheran and Calvinistic Churches on the Continent from the Reformation down to the Restoration in 1662, when the Ordinal was introduced in its present form.

Archbishop Cranmer, the greatest Anglican liturgist, called Martin Bucer, a mediator between the Lutheran and the Swiss Reformers, from Strassburg to the chair of systematic theology in Cambridge, and Peter Martyr, a strict Calvinist, in the same capacity, to the University of Oxford, and consulted them freely in the preparation of the Articles of Religion and the Book of Common Prayer. The Elizabethan bishops, who during their exile under Queen Mary had sought refuge in Zürich, Basel, and Geneva, wrote letters overflowing with gratitude for the hospitality and kindness received from the Swiss Reformers and preachers, and addressed them as spiritual fathers and brethren. Bullinger's *Decades* and Calvin's *Institutes* were the highest authorities in the universities of England, and the influence of Beza's editions of the Greek Testament, his text and notes, is manifest in the Authorized Version of King James. The "judicious" Hooker, the standard writer on church polity, expressed profound veneration for Calvin as "the wisest man that ever the French Church did enjoy" (Preface to his *Ecclesiastical Polity*); and he expressly admitted an "extraordinary kind of vocation where the Church must needs have some ordained and neither hath nor can have possibly a bishop to ordain; in case of such necessity, the ordinary institution of God hath given oftentimes, and may give, place. And therefore we are not simply without exception to urge a lineal descent of power from the Apostles by continued succession of bishops in every effectual ordination" (*Ecclesiastical Polity*, book vii., 14). Even James I., who hated the Presbyterians, sent five delegates, including three bishops (George Carleton, John Davenant, and Joseph Hall), to the Calvinistic Synod of Dort, who raised no

question about the necessity of the episcopate for the being or the well-being of the Church.

Let us learn something from history. All respect for the historic episcopate! It goes back in unbroken line almost to the beginning of the second century, and no one can dispute its historical necessity or measure its usefulness. But God has also signally blessed the Lutheran, the Presbyterian, and the Congregational ministry for many generations, with every prospect of growing usefulness for the future; and what God has blessed no man should lightly esteem. The non-episcopal Churches will never imbrue themselves and cast reproach on their ministry. They will only negotiate with the Episcopal Church on the basis of equality and a recognition of the validity of their ministry. Each denomination must offer its idol on the altar of reunion.

But it is to be hoped that the Episcopal Church will give the historic episcopate, as "locally adapted," such a liberal construction as to include "the historic presbyterate," which dates from the apostolic age and was never interrupted, or will drop it altogether, as a term of reunion. At the Reunion Conference at Grindelwald in 1892, which is to be repeated at Lucerne in 1893, Episcopal dignitaries conferred with Dissenting ministers as Christian brethren.

In any case, we hail the Episcopal proposal as an important step in the right direction, and as a hopeful sign of the future. It is in the line of a noble project of Archbishop Crammer, who was deeply grieved at the distractions of the Church, and invited Melancthon, Bullinger, and Calvin to a conference in Lambeth Palace for the purpose of drawing up a consensus creed of the Reformed Churches. Calvin replied that for such a holy purpose he would cross not only the English Channel, but ten seas.

ORGANIC UNION.

1. An organic union between the *Lutheran* and *German Reformed Churches*, into which German Protestantism has been divided since the sixteenth century, was effected in 1817 in connection with the third centennial of the Reformation, under the lead of Frederick William III., King of Prussia and father of the first emperor of united Germany. He was German Reformed, like his ancestors from the time of John Sigismund of Brandenburg (1614), but a majority of his subjects were Lutherans. Hence the traditional tendency of the House of Hohenzollern towards union. The name of *The United Evangelical Church* was substituted for the two separate denominational names, but freedom was allowed to retain the Lutheran or Reformed creed, and to use the Augsburg Confession or the Heidelberg Catechism, according to custom or preference. The Prussian Union, therefore, is not an absorptive, but a conservative, union of two confessions under the same government and administration.

Several other German States, as Baden and Württemberg, have followed the example of Prussia to their advantage; while those States which were exclusively Lutheran, as Saxony and the Saxon Duchies, adhere to their Lutheran name and tradition.

The Evangelical Union has been accompanied and strengthened, since the days of Schleiermacher and Neander, by a corresponding type of theology, which combines Lutheran and Calvinistic elements. This theology, divided into different schools, prevails in all the Prussian universities, as also in Heidelberg and Tübingen, and is the most progressive theology of the age.

2. In our country, the recent history of the *Presbyterian Church* furnishes an example of organic union. The *Old School*

and the *New School*, which were divided in 1837 on doctrinal questions, were reunited by a free and simultaneous impulse in the year 1869 on the basis of orthodoxy and liberty, and have prospered all the more since their reunion, although the differences between conservative and progressive tendencies still remain, and have, within the last few years, come into collision on the questions of a Revision of the Westminster Standards, and the historical criticism of the Bible.

3. The four divisions of *Presbyterians* in *Canada* have forgotten their old family quarrels, and have been united in one organization since 1875.

4. The *Methodists* in *Canada*, who, till 1874, were divided into five independent bodies, have recently united in one organization.

UNION WITH THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

If all the Protestant Churches were united by federal or organic union, the greater, the most difficult, and the most important part of the work would still remain to be accomplished; for Christian union must include the Greek and the Roman Churches. They are the oldest, the largest, and claim to be the most orthodox; the former numbering about 84,000,000 members, the latter 215,000,000, while all the Protestant denominations together number only 130,000,000.

If any one Church is to be the center of unification, that honor must be conceded to the Greek or the Roman communion. The Protestant denominations are all descended, directly or indirectly, from the Latin Church of the Middle Ages; while the Greek and Latin Churches trace their origin back to the apostolic age, the Greek to the congregation of Jerusalem, the Latin to the congregation of Rome.

THE GREEK AND ROMAN CHURCHES.

First of all, the two great divisions of Catholicism should come to an agreement among themselves on the disputed questions about the eternal Procession of the Holy Spirit, and the authority of the Bishop of Rome.

On both points, the Greek Church is supported by the testimony of antiquity, and could not yield without stultifying her whole history. The original Nicene Creed does not teach a double Proceession, which is a later addition, made in Spain and Gaul, and first disapproved by Pope Leo III., but aeccepted by his successors; and the Œcumenical Conneils, all of which were held in the East and called by the Greek emperors, concede to the Bishop of Old Rome only a primaey of honor among five patriarchs of equal rights and independent jurisdiction.

The first difficulty could easily be solved by omitting the *Filioque* from the Nicene Creed, or by substituting "*sent by* the Father and the Son," for "*proceeds from* the Father and the Son." For the Greek Church never denied the double *Mission* of the Spirit which began with the day of Pentecost, while the *Procession* is an eternal intertrinitarian process, like the eternal generation of the Son from the Father.

The second difficulty is far greater.

Will Rome ever make concessions to the truth of history? We hope that she will.

THE OLD CATHOLIC UNION CONFERENCES.

Under the auspices of the Old Catholic Church, and under the lead of Dr. Döllinger of Munich, who, before he was excommunicated on account of his protest against the Vatican dogma of papal infallibility, was esteemed in the Roman Church as her most learned historian and divine, two conferences were held

at Bonn, in 1874 and 1875, with a view to prepare for a confederation and intercommunion of the Old Catholic, the Orthodox Greek and Russian, and the Anglican Churches, on the basis of the œcumenical consensus of the ancient Church before the division, and of the Episcopal succession.

These conferences were attended by some of the ablest and most learned dignitaries of these three communions, and agreed upon a doctrinal basis of fourteen articles, and the settlement of the *Filioque* controversy by a compromise which substitutes the Procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father *through* the Son for the Latin doctrine of the Procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father *and* the Son.*

These important conclusions of the Bonn Conferences have not been officially ratified by any of the Eastern or Anglican Churches, but may be revived and acted upon at some future time.

There is a party among the Anglo-Catholics which is more anxious for union with the Old Catholic and the Græco-Russian

* See the German and Latin text of the Bonn Consensus, with a historical introduction, in Schaff's *Creeeds of Christendom*, vol. ii., pp. 545-554. Dr. Döllinger regarded the Vatican dogma of infallibility and the order of the Jesuits as the chief obstacles to the reunion of Churches, but hoped that the agreement at Bonn might be a means for orientation and a basis for future transactions at a more favorable political conjunction. See his lectures on the *Wiedervereinigung der christlichen Kirchen* (Nördlingen, 1888). These lectures were delivered at Munich, 1872, translated into English by Oxenham from manuscript and newspaper reports (London, 1872), and from English into French by Mrs. Hyacinthe-Loyson (*La reunion des églises*, Paris, 1880), and finally published by the author himself (1888).

I was present, as an invited guest, at the Second Conference in Bonn, and listened with admiration to Döllinger's speeches, which were brimful of information and delivered in excellent English with youthful vigor, although he was then seventy-six years old. He seemed to know more about the subject than all the other delegates. Repeated efforts were made, even by Pope Leo XIII., to win him back, but he died excommunicated in 1890, in his ninety-second year. See *Briefe und Erklärungen von J. von Döllinger über die Vaticanischen Decrete, 1869-1887* (edited by Prof. Reusch), München, 1890.

Church than with any Protestant denomination nearer home, although the Greek and Russian delegates at Bonn expressed doubts as to the validity of Anglican orders.

The conferences with the Old Catholics were resumed in Switzerland in 1892.

PAPAL INFALLIBILITY.

The difficulty of union with the Roman Church is apparently increased by the modern dogma of papal absolutism and papal infallibility, declared by the Vatican Council in 1870. This dogma is the logical completion of the papal monarchy, the apex of the pyramid of the hierarchy. But it can refer only to the Roman Church. The official decisions of the pope, as the legitimate head of the Roman Church, are final and binding upon all Roman Catholics, but they have no force whatever for any other Christians.

The antichristian feature of the papacy to which the Reformers objected, begins where the pope claims jurisdiction over all Christendom. It is no less than a pope, and one of the very best of them, Gregory I., who protested in official (and therefore infallible) letters against the assumption by the Greek patriarchs of the title of "œcumenical" or "universal bishop," which, he says, belongs to Christ alone. He branded such an assumption as "antichristian," and preferred to call himself "the servant of the servants of God."

What if the pope, in the spirit of the first Gregory and under the inspiration of a higher authority, should infallibly declare his own fallibility in all matters lying outside of his own communion, and invite Greeks and Protestants to a fraternal pan-Christian council in Jerusalem, where the mother-church of Christendom held the first council of reconciliation and peace?

But whether in Jerusalem or Rome, or (as Cardinal Wiseman thought) in Berlin, or (as some Americans think) on the banks

of the Mississippi, the war between Rome and Constantinople, and between Rome, Wittenberg, Geneva and Oxford, will be fought out to a peaceful end when all the Churches shall be thoroughly christianized and all the creeds of Christendom unified in the creed of Christ.

RESTATEMENT OF CONFESSIONAL DIFFERENCES IN THE
INTEREST OF TRUTH AND PEACE.

The reunion of the entire Catholic Church, Greek and Roman, with the Protestant Churches, will require such a restatement of all the controverted points by both parties as shall remove misrepresentations, neutralize the anathemas pronounced upon imaginary heresies, and show the way to harmony in a broader, higher, and deeper consciousness of God's truth and God's love.

In the heat of controversy, and in the struggle for supremacy, the contending parties mutually misrepresented each other's views, put them in the most unfavorable light, and perverted partial truths into unmixed errors. Like hostile armies engaged in battle, they aimed at the destruction of the enemy. Protestants in their confessions of faith and polemical works denounced the pope as "the Antichrist," the papists as "idolaters," the Roman mass as an "accursed idolatry," and the Roman Church as "the synagogue of Satan" and "the Babylonian harlot,"—all in perfect honesty, on the ground of certain misunderstood passages of St. Paul and St. John, and especially of the mysterious Book of the Revelation, whose references to the persecutions of pagan Rome were directly or indirectly applied to papal Rome. Rome answered by bloody persecutions; the Council of Trent closed with a double anathema on all Protestant heretics, and the pope annually repeats the curse in the holy week, when all Christians should humbly and penitently

meet around the cross on which the Saviour died for the sins of the whole world.

When these hostile armies, after a long struggle for supremacy without success, shall come together for the settlement of terms of peace, they will be animated by a spirit of conciliation and single devotion to the honor of the great Head of the Church, who is the divine concord of all human discords.

PETER AND PAUL.

There is truth and comfort in the idea that the apostolic age anticipated the war and peace of subsequent ages.

The Apostles who thus far have most influenced the course of Church history are Peter and Paul. The Apostle whose spirit will preside over the final consummation is John, the bosom friend of Jesus, the Apostle of love.

Peter, the Apostle of authority, represents Jewish and Roman Christianity; while Paul, the Apostle of freedom, who was called last, and called irregularly, yet none the less divinely, is a type of Gentile and Protestant Christianity. Peter was called "Rock," but also "Satan," by his Master. He first confessed Christ; he even hastily drew the sword in his defense; and then denied him three times. But Christ prayed for him that his faith "fail not," and prophesied that he would "turn again and strengthen his brethren" (Luke 22:32). All popes have confessed Christ, and many have drawn the sword, or caused temporal princes to draw it, against heretics; some have denied Christ by their wicked lives: will not some future pope "turn again and strengthen his brethren"?

The same Peter boldly defended the liberty of the Gentile converts at the Council of Jerusalem and protested against the intolerable yoke of bondage; yet afterward, in consistent inconsistency, he practically disowned that liberty at Antioch, and

withdrew from fellowship with the Gentile brethren (Gal. 2 : 11 sqq.). Has not the pope again and again unchurched all Protestant Churches, and denied that liberty wherewith Christ has made us free ?

Peter accepted the severe rebuke of the younger Apostle of the Gentiles, and both died martyrs in Rome, to live forever united in the grateful memory of the Church. If the pope should acknowledge the sins of the papacy and extend the hand of brotherhood to his fellow-Christians of other Churches, he would only follow the example of him whom he regards as his first predecessor in office.

ORTHODOXY AND PROGRESS.

The whole system of traditional orthodoxy, Greek, Latin, and Protestant, must progress, or it will be left behind the age and lose its hold on thinking men. The Church must keep pace with civilization, adjust herself to the modern conditions of religions and political freedom, and accept the established results of biblical and historical criticism, and natural science. God speaks in history and science as well as in the Bible and the Church, and he cannot contradict himself. Truth is sovereign, and must and will prevail over all ignorance, error, and prejudice.

EXEGETICAL PROGRESS.

The history of the Bible is to a large extent a history of abuse as well as use, of imposition as well as exposition. No book has been more perverted.

The mechanical inspiration theory of the seventeenth century, which confounded inspiration with dictation and reduced the biblical authors to mere clerks, has been superseded by a spiritual and dynamic theory, which alone can account for the

obvious peculiarities of thought and style, and which consists with the dignity of God and the freedom of man.

Textual criticism has, after two or three centuries of patient comparison of manuscripts, versions, and patristic quotations as they gradually came to light, purified the traditional text of the Greek Testament, correcting many passages and omitting later interpolations. The criticism of the Hebrew Bible text and the Septuagint has begun the same fundamental process.

Historical criticism is putting the literature of both Testaments in a new light, and makes it more real and intelligible by explaining its environments and organic growth until the completion of the canon.

The wild allegorical exegesis, which turns the Bible into a nose of wax and makes it to teach anything that is pious or orthodox, has been gradually superseded by an honest grammatical and historical exegesis, which takes out the real meaning of the writer instead of putting in the fancies of the reader.

Many proof texts of Protestants against popery, and of Romanists against Protestantism, and of both for orthodoxy or against heresy, can no longer be used for partisan purposes.

HISTORICAL PROGRESS.

Church history has undergone of late a great change, partly in consequence of the discovery of lost documents and deeper research, partly on account of the standpoint of the historian and the new spirit in which history is written.

1. Many documents on which theories and usages were built, have been abandoned as untenable even by Roman Catholic scholars. We mention the legend of the literal composition of the Apostles' Creed by the Apostles, and of the origin of the creed which was attributed to Athanasius, though it did not appear till four centuries after his death; the fiction of Constantine's Donation; the apocryphal letters of pseudo-Ignatius,

of pseudo-Clement, of pseudo-Isidorns, and other post-apostolic and mediæval falsifications of history, which were universally believed till the time of the Reformation, and even down to the eighteenth century.

2. Genuine history is being rewritten from the standpoint of impartial truth and justice. If facts are found to contravene a cherished theory, all the worse for the theory; for facts are truths, and truth is of God, while theories are of men.

Formerly Church history was made a mere appendix to systematic theology, or abused and perverted for polemical purposes.

The older historians, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, searched ancient and mediæval history for weapons to defeat their opponents and to establish their own exclusive claims. Flacius, the first learned Protestant historian, saw nothing but antichristian darkness in the Middle Ages, with the exception of a few scattered "*Testes Veritatis*," and described the Roman Church from the fifth to the sixteenth century as the great apostasy of prophecy. But modern Protestant historians, following the example of Neander, who is called "The Father of Church History," regard the Middle Ages as the period of the conversion and the civilization of the barbarians, as a necessary link between ancient and modern Christianity, and as the cradle of the Reformation.

On the other hand, the opposite type of historiography, represented by Cardinal Baronius, traced the papacy to the beginning of the Christian era, maintained its identity through all ages, and denounced the Reformers as arch-heretics and the Reformation as the foul source of revolution, war, and infidelity, and of all the evils of modern society. But the impartial scholars of the Roman Catholic Church now admit the necessity of the Reformation, the pure and unselfish motives of the Reformers, and the beneficial effects of their labors upon their own Church. We may refer to the remarkable judgments of Döl-

linger on Luther and of Kampschulte on Calvin, based upon a thorough knowledge of their writings.*

A great change of spirit has also taken place among the historians of the different Protestant denominations. The early Lutheran abhorrence of Zwinglianism and Calvinism has disappeared from the best Lutheran manuals of Church history. The bitterness between Prelatists and Puritans, Calvinists and Arminians, Baptists and Pædobaptists, has given way to a calm and just appreciation.

The impartial historian can find no ideal Church in any age. It was a high-priest in Aaron's line that crucified the Saviour; a Judas was among the Apostles; all sorts of sins among church-members are rebuked in the Epistles of the New Testament; there were "many antichrists" in the age of St. John, and there have been many since, even in the temple of God. Nearly all Churches have acted as persecutors when they had the chance, if not by fire and sword, at least by misrepresentation, vituperation, and abuse. For these and all other sins, they should repent in dust and ashes. One only is pure and spotless—the great Head of the Church, who redeemed it with his precious blood.

But the historian finds, on the other hand, in every age and in every Church, the footprints of Christ, the abundant manifestations of his Spirit, and a slow but sure progress toward that ideal Church which St. Paul describes as "the fullness of him who filleth all in all."

The study of Church history, like travel in foreign lands,

* See these judgments quoted in Schaff's *Church History*, vol. vi., pp. 741 sq., and vol. vii., pp. 285, 412. It is true, Döllinger and Kampschulte died excommunicated on account of their opposition to the Vatican dogma of papal infallibility, but they were good Catholics in every other respect. Janssen's famous *History of the German People* and Pastor's *History of the Popes of the Renaissance* are written from the modern ultramontane standpoint, but even they after all differ considerably in tone from the older Roman Catholic historians.

destroys prejudice, enlarges the horizon, liberalizes the mind, and deepens charity. Palestine by its eloquent ruins serves as a commentary on the life of Christ, and has not inaptly been called "the fifth Gospel." So also the history of the Church furnishes the key to unlock the meaning of the Church in all its ages and branches.

The study of history—"with malice toward none, but with charity for all"—will bring the denominations closer together in an humble recognition of their defects and a grateful praise for the good which the same Spirit has wrought in them and through them.

CHANGES OF OPINIONS.

Important changes have also taken place in traditional opinions and practices once deemed pious and orthodox.

The Church in the Middle Ages first condemned the philosophy of Aristotle, but at last turned it into a powerful ally in the defense of her doctrines, and so gave to the world the *Summa* of Thomas Aquinas and the *Divina Commedia* of Dante, who regarded the great Stagirite as a forerunner of Christ, as a philosophical John the Baptist. Luther, likewise, in his wrath against scholastic theology, condemned "the accursed heathen Aristotle," but Melancthon judged differently, and Protestant scholarship has long since settled upon a just estimate.

Gregory VII., Innocent III., and other popes of the Middle Ages claimed and exercised the power, as vicars of Christ, to depose kings, to absolve subjects from their oath of allegiance, and to lay whole nations under the interdict for the disobedience of an individual. But no pope would presume to do such a thing now, nor would any Catholic king or nation tolerate it for a moment.

The strange mythical notion of the ancient Fathers, that the Christian redemption was the payment of a debt due to the

devil, who had a claim upon men since the fall of Adam, but had forfeited it by the crucifixion, was abandoned after Anselm had published the more rational theory of a vicarious atonement in discharge of a debt due to God.

The unchristian and horrible doctrine that all unbaptized infants who never committed any actual transgression, are damned forever and ever, prevailed for centuries under the authority of the great and holy Augustin, but has lost its hold even upon those divines who defend the necessity of water-baptism for salvation. Even high Anglicans and strict Calvinists admit that all children dying in infancy are saved.

The equally unchristian and fearful theory and practice of religious compulsion and persecution by fire and sword, first mildly suggested by the same Augustin, and then formulated by the master-theologian of the Middle Ages (Thomas Aquinas), who deemed a heretic, or murderer of the soul, more worthy of death than a murderer of the body, has given way at last to the theory and practice of toleration and liberty.

The delusion of witchcraft, which extended even to Puritan New England and has cost almost as many victims as the tribunals of the Inquisition, has disappeared from all Christian nations forever.

THE CHURCH AND SCIENCE.

A few words about the relation of the Church to natural and physical science.

Protestants and Catholics alike unanimously rejected the Copernican astronomy as a heresy fatal to the geocentric account of the creation, in Genesis; but after a century of opposition which culminated in the condemnation of Galileo by the Roman Inquisition under Urban VIII., they have adopted it without a dissenting voice, and "the earth still moves."

Similar concessions will be made to modern geology and biol-

ogy, when they have passed the stage of conjecture and reached an agreement as to facts. The Bible does not determine the age of the earth or man, and leaves a large margin for difference of opinion even on purely exegetical grounds. The theory of the evolution of animal life, far from contradicting the fact of creation, presupposes it; for every evolution must have a beginning, and this can only be accounted for by an infinite intelligence and creative will. God's power and wisdom are even more wonderful in the continual process than in a single act.

The theory of historical development, which corresponds to the theory of physical evolution, and preceded it, was first denounced by orthodox divines (within my own recollection) as a dangerous error leading to infidelity, but is now adopted by every historian. It is indorsed by Christ himself in the twin parables of the mustard-seed and the leaven. "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear," this is the order of the unfolding of the Christian life, both in the individual and the Church. But there is another law of development no less important, which may be called the law of creative headships. Every important intellectual and religious movement begins with a towering personality which cannot be explained from antecedents, but marks a new epoch. Take as illustrations: Moses and the history of Israel, Socrates and the Greek philosophers, Caesar and the Roman emperors, Constantine the Great and the Byzantine emperors, Charlemagne and the German emperors, Washington and the American presidents, Napoleon and his generals, Dante and the Italian poets, Shakespeare and the English poets, Raphael and his school of painters, Luther and the Lutheran divines, Calvin and the Reformed divines, Spenser and the Pietists, Zinzendorf and the Moravians, Wesley and the Methodists, and, above all, Jesus Christ, who is the great central miracle of history, the beginning, the middle, and the end of Christianity.

The Bible, we must all acknowledge, is not, and never claimed to be, a guide of chronology, astronomy, geology, or any other science, but solely a book of religion, a rule of faith and practice, a guide to holy living and dying. There is, therefore, no room for a conflict between the Bible and science, faith and reason, authority and freedom, the Church and civilization. They run in parallel lines, independent, and yet friendly and mutually helpful, tending to the same end—the salvation and perfection of man in the kingdom of God.

MEANS OF PROMOTING CHRISTIAN UNION.

Before the reunion of Christendom can be accomplished, we must expect providential events, new Pentecosts, new reformations—as great as any that have gone before. The twentieth century has marvelous surprises in store for the Church and the world, which may surpass even those of the nineteenth. History now moves with telegraphic speed, and may accomplish the work of years in a single day. The modern inventions of the steamboat, the telegraph, the power of electricity, the progress of science and of international law (which regulates commerce by land and by sea, and will in due time make an end of war), link all the civilized nations into one vast brotherhood.

Let us consider some of the moral means by which a similar affiliation and consolidation of the different Churches may be hastened.

1. The cultivation of an irenic and evangelical-catholic spirit in the personal intercourse with our fellow-Christians of other denominations. We must meet them on common rather than on disputed ground, and assume that they are as honest and earnest as we in the pursuit of truth. We must make allowance for differences in education and surroundings, which to a large extent account for differences of opinion. Courtesy

and kindness conciliate, while suspicion excites irritation and attack. Controversy will never cease, but the golden rule of the most polemic among the Apostles—to “speak the truth in love”—cannot be too often repeated. Nor should we forget the seraphic description of love, which the same Apostle commends above all other gifts and the tongues of men and angels—yea, even above faith and hope.

2. Coöperation in Christian and philanthropic work draws men together and promotes their mutual confidence and regard. Faith without works is dead. Sentiment and talk about union are idle without actual manifestation in works of charity and philanthropy.

3. Missionary societies should at once come to a definite agreement, prohibiting all mutual interference in their efforts to spread the gospel at home and abroad. Every missionary of the cross should wish and pray for the prosperity of all other missionaries, and lend a helping hand in trouble. “What then? only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and therein I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.”

It is preposterous, yea, wicked, to trouble the minds of the heathen or of Roman Catholics with our domestic quarrels, and to plant half a dozen rival Churches in small towns, where one or two would suffice, thus saving men and means. Unfortunately, the sectarian spirit and mistaken zeal for peculiar views and customs very materially interfere with the success of our vast expenditures and efforts for the conversion of the world.

4. The study of Church history has already been mentioned as an important means of correcting sectarian prejudices and increasing mutual appreciation. The study of symbolic or comparative theology is one of the most important branches of history in this respect, especially in our country, where profess-

ors of all the creeds of Christendom meet in daily contact, and should become thoroughly acquainted with one another.

5. One word suffices as regards the duty and privilege of prayer for Christian union, in the spirit of our Lord's sacerdotal prayer, that his disciples may all be one in him, as he is one with the Father.

CONCLUSION.

We welcome to the reunion of Christendom all denominations which have followed the divine Master and have done his work. Let us forgive and forget their many sins and errors, and remember only their virtues and merits.

✓ The Greek Church is a glorious Church: for in her language have come down to us the oracles of God, the Septuagint, the Gospels, and Epistles: hers are the early confessors and martyrs, the Christian fathers, bishops, patriarchs, and emperors: hers the immortal writings of Origen, Eusebius, Athanasius, and Chrysostom: hers the Œcumenical Councils and the Nicene Creed, which can never die.

✓ The Latin Church is a glorious Church: for she carried the treasures of Christian and classical literature over the gulf of the migration of nations, and preserved order in the chaos of civil wars: she was the *Alma Mater* of the barbarians of Europe: she turned painted savages into civilized beings, and worshipers of idols into worshipers of Christ: she built up the colossal structures of the papal theocracy, the canon law, the monastic orders, the cathedrals, and the universities: she produced the profound systems of scholastic and mystic theology: she stimulated and patronized the Renaissance, the printing-press, and the discovery of a new world: she still stands, like an immovable rock, bearing witness to the fundamental truths and facts of our holy religion, and to the catholicity, unity, unbroken continuity, and independence of the Church: and she is as

zealous as ever in missionary enterprise and self-denying works of Christian charity.

We hail the Reformation which redeemed us from the yoke of spiritual despotism, and secured us religious liberty—the most precious of all liberties, and made the Bible in every language a book for all classes and conditions of men.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church, the first-born daughter of the Reformation, is a glorious Church: for she set the word of God above the traditions of men, and bore witness to the comforting truth of justification by faith; she struck the keynote to thousands of sweet hymns in praise of the Redeemer; she is boldly and reverently investigating the problems of faith and philosophy, and is constantly making valuable additions to theological lore.

The Evangelical Reformed Church is a glorious Church: for she carried the Reformation from the Alps and lakes of Switzerland “to the end of the West” (to use the words of the Roman Clement about St. Paul); she furnished more martyrs of conscience in France and the Netherlands alone, than any other Church, even during the first three centuries; she educated heroic races, like the Huguenots, the Dutch, the Puritans, the Covenanters, the Pilgrim Fathers, who by the fear of God were raised above the fear of tyrants, and lived and died for the advancement of civil and religious liberty; she is rich in learning and good works of faith; she keeps pace with all true progress; she grapples with the problems and evils of modern society; and she sends the gospel to the ends of the earth.

The Episcopal Church of England, the most churchly of the Reformed family, is a glorious Church: for she gave to the English-speaking world the best version of the Holy Scriptures and the best Prayer-Book; she preserved the order and dignity of the ministry and public worship; she nursed the knowledge and love of antiquity, and enriched the treasury of Christian

literature; and by the Anglo-Catholic revival under the moral, intellectual, and poetic leadership of three shining lights of Oxford—Pusey, Newman, and Keble—she infused new life into her institutions and customs, and prepared the way for a better understanding between Anglicanism and Romanism.

The Presbyterian Church of Scotland, the most flourishing daughter of Geneva—as John Knox, “who never feared the face of man,” was the most faithful disciple of Calvin—is a glorious Church: for she turned a barren country into a garden, and raised a poor and semi-barbarous people to a level with the richest and most intelligent nations: she diffused the knowledge of the Bible and a love of the Kirk in the huts of the peasant as well as the palaces of the nobleman; she has always stood up for church order and discipline, for the rights of the laity, and first and last for the crown-rights of King Jesus, which are above all earthly crowns, even that of the proudest monarch in whose dominion the sun never sets.

The Congregational Church is a glorious Church: for she has taught the principle, and proved the capacity, of congregational independence and self-government based upon a living faith in Christ, without diminishing the effect of voluntary coöperation in the Master's service; and has laid the foundation of New England, with its literary and theological institutions and high social culture.

The Baptist Church is a glorious Church: for she bore, and still bears, testimony to the primitive mode of baptism, to the purity of the congregation, to the separation of Church and State, and the liberty of conscience; and has given to the world the *Pilgrim's Progress* of Bunyan, such preachers as Robert Hall and Charles H. Spurgeon, and such missionaries as Carey and Judson.

The Methodist Church, the Church of John Wesley, Charles Wesley, and George Whitefield—three of the best and most

apostolic Englishmen, abounding in useful labors, the first as a ruler and organizer, the second as a hymnist, the third as an evangelist—is a glorious Church: for she produced the greatest religious revival since the day of Pentecost; she preaches a free and full salvation to all; she is never afraid to fight the devil, and she is hopefully and cheerfully marching on, in both hemispheres, as an army of conquest.

The Society of Friends, though one of the smallest tribes in Israel, is a glorious Society: for it has borne witness to the inner light which “lighteth every man that cometh into the world”; it has proved the superiority of the Spirit over all forms; it has done noble service in promoting tolerance and liberty, in prison reform, the emancipation of slaves, and other works of Christian philanthropy.

The Brotherhood of the Moravians, founded by Count Zinzendorf—a true nobleman of nature and of grace—is a glorious Brotherhood: for it is the pioneer of heathen missions, and of Christian union among Protestant Churches; it was like an oasis in the desert of German rationalism at home, while its missionaries went forth to the lowest savages in distant lands to bring them to Christ. I beheld with wonder and admiration a venerable Moravian couple devoting their lives to the care of hopeless lepers in the vicinity of Jerusalem.

Nor should we forget the services of many who are accounted heretics.

The Waldenses were witnesses of a pure and simple faith in times of superstition, and having outlived many bloody persecutions, are now missionaries among the descendants of their persecutors.

The Anabaptists and Socinians, who were so cruelly treated in the sixteenth century by Protestants and Romanists alike, were the first to raise their voice for religious liberty and the voluntary principle in religion.

Unitarianism is a serious departure from the trinitarian faith of orthodox Christendom, but it did good service as a protest against tritheism, and against a stiff, narrow, and uncharitable orthodoxy. It brought into prominence the human perfection of Christ's character, and illustrated the effect of his example in the noble lives and devotional writings of such men as Channing and Martineau. It has also given us some of our purest and sweetest poets, as Emerson, Bryant, Longfellow, and Lowell, whom all good men must honor and love for their lofty moral tone.

Universalism may be condemned as a doctrine; but it has a right to protest against a gross materialistic theory of hell with all its Dantesque horrors, and against the once widely spread popular belief that the overwhelming majority of the human race, including countless millions of innocent infants, will forever perish. Nor should we forget that some of the greatest divines, from Origen and Gregory of Nyssa down to Bengel and Schleiermacher, believed in, or hoped for, the ultimate return of all rational creatures to the God of love, who created them in his own image and for his own glory.

And, coming down to the latest organization of Christian work, which does not claim to be a Church, but which is a help to all Churches,—the Salvation Army: we hail it, in spite of its strange and abnormal methods, as the most effective revival agency since the days of Wesley and Whitefield; for it descends to the lowest depths of degradation and misery, and brings the light and comfort of the gospel to the slums of our large cities. Let us thank God for the noble men and women who, under the inspiration of the love of Christ, and unmindful of hardship, ridicule, and persecution, sacrifice their lives to the rescue of the hopeless outcasts of society. Truly, these good Samaritans are an honor to the name of Christ and a benediction to a lost world.

There is room for all these and many other Churches and societies in the kingdom of God, whose height and depth and length and breadth, variety and beauty, surpass human comprehension.

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen.”

APPENDIX.

THIS appendix, according to the plan of Dr. Schaff, contains expressions of opinion from representative divines on the Reunion of Christendom. They came in response to letters which Dr. Schaff sent out with his own hand. Two or three of the replies are not included here, as they confine themselves to words of personal appreciation of Dr. Schaff and his work, as is the case with a cordial letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury. In the letters which follow, all personal references to Dr. Schaff and his address have been eliminated, except where they afford positive indication of the writer's mind on the general subject. This is in accordance with Dr. Schaff's instructions.

Dr. Schaff suffered from a severe attack of *angina pectoris* October 9, 1893, after which he did not again leave his home. On the 18th he was stricken with paralysis, and on the 20th passed to his reward.

The paper on the Reunion of Christendom was presented in part at the World's Parliament of Religions, September 25, 1893. Forbidden by physicians to deliver it himself, Dr. Schaff sat on the platform while it was being read by the Rev. Dr. Simon J. McPherson. The great audience received it with the most marked signs of approbation. The paper was again read in part at the congress held in Chicago under the auspices of the Evangelical Alliance, by Rev. Joachim Elmendorf, D.D.

Dr. Schaff, after his return to New York from the Parliament of Religions, was urged by the officers of the Alliance to go again to Chicago and be present at the reading of the remainder of his paper. Every comfort modern modes of travel afford was assured to him. After a struggle against a strong desire once more to show his interest in the purposes and work of the Alliance, by his presence on that important occasion, Dr. Schaff reluctantly declined, yielding to what others assured him were the urgent demands of his health.

The very last labor which Dr. Schaff gave to the public was upon this appendix. He may almost be said to have died for the cause of the Reunion of Christendom. During the ten days of his last illness he read a number of the letters found below, arranged them, and, with characteristic promptness, sent them to the officers of the Alliance for the printer. In their publication he felt an intense interest. The preparation of the original address occupied his mind during his summer holidays at Lake Mohonk, exacting much time and solicitous care—more, perhaps, according to his own statement, than he had ever given to any work before.

He was borne on to go to the Parliament of Religions by his interest in that convention, and by his desire to be present at the reading of his address, when he knew the journey and the excitement involved great risk to his life. During his last days he distinctly declared to his family that if he were certain that his work upon his address and his visit to the Parliament of Religions had brought on his sickness and should hasten his death, he still was glad that he had done what he did. The Reunion of Christendom, therefore, was not only the last service Dr. Schaff did for the Church, it was the last interest of a public nature that engaged his mind and heart.

The statement, since Dr. Schaff's death, of the veteran editor, Dr. Bright, of "The Examiner," a chief organ of the American

Baptist churches, is perhaps not unmerited eulogy: "Philip Schaff did more than any other man of his time to promote Christian unity."

Anglican.

I have also written a paper for the Parliament of Religions, and what I have said, if compared with what you have said, would be the best criticism on your views. I have found nothing, or next to nothing, to dissent from in your very comprehensive statement; but you will see, if you look into mine, that I look for union mainly in the redressing of the balance of Christian interest, in laying less stress on public worship and its adjuncts of formulated doctrine and ritual and clerical organization, and much more on the conduct of life in the family, the municipality, and the state. When we work together for the kingdom of God, each section can honor the others, as your conclusion recommends, and the beneficent changes which you trace historically on pages 31 to 38 will reach their consummation.

W. H. FREMANTLE.

[*Canon of Canterbury.*]

CANTERBURY, Sept. 29, 1893.

Anglican.

I was at both the Reunion conferences at Bonn, by Dr. Döllinger's invitation, and it was at the second of them that I first saw you. The Reunion movement has spread and intensified greatly during the eighteen years which have elapsed since then. We need not fear that it will stop.

I believe Reunion will come with a rush at last, like a consuming fire in well-prepared fuel. It is our part to see that the fuel is prepared.

Like most great movements, it will probably begin from below; with the laity rather than the clergy; with the Protestant churches rather than with Easterns or Romans. We ought to aim at this. Non-Episcopalian bodies ought to unite and then endeavor to come to terms with Episcopalian Protestant churches. If Protestant churches were united, and Episcopacy adopted as the more excellent way for the future, we might then approach the Eastern churches, which are already beginning to admit light from the West; and perhaps at last even Rome would accept something less than submission. But all this means centuries of prayer and work.

I often repeat to myself, and sometimes to others, two sayings of Döllinger's. The first is this: That we ought to make the very most that we can of the all-important points about which nearly all Christians are agreed, and the very least that we can of the *comparatively* unimportant points about which we differ. That seems to be almost a truism; but how many Christians behave on exactly the opposite principle!

The second is this. People sometimes ask, "But do you seriously believe that the Reunion of Christendom is possible?" To this Döllinger long ago replied, "Es *muss* ja möglich sein, denn es ist *Pflicht*."

Never did the Kantian principle, "We ought, therefore we can," come home to me so forcibly as in that striking application of it. We *ought* to be reunited; therefore it *can* be done. This is the right antidote for the pessimism which would tell us that a reunited Christendom is the dream of enthusiasts and that to spend time in working for it is sheer waste.

Our blessed Lord was not wasting time when he prayed that they all may be one; and we shall not be wasting time when we pray and work for this end.

ALFRED PLUMMER.

[*Professor University College, Durham.*]

DURHAM, Oct. 16, 1893.

Baptist.

The Reunion of Christendom is the overshadowing problem of modern ecclesiology. How shall this Reunion be effected? Not by decreeing uniformity of outward organization: this is the mistake of the Church of Rome. Not by abolishing denominations: this is to overlook the sublime truth of diversities in unity. Not by compromising principle: this is to be false to man and God. But by carrying out God's own principle of comprehension, soaring high enough to include diversities, even as God's own sky includes ocean and forest, valley and mountain, sun and flower. As a matter of fact, each denomination, in rearing its own ecclesiastical structure, works selectively, and builds on the remembrance of certain Scriptures which it regards as favorable, and on the oblivion of certain other Scriptures which it regards as unfavorable; equally skilled in the art of remembering and in the art of forgetting. . . . Each sect errs, not so much in what it believes, as in what it ignores. The coming ideal church will be built, not on a selection of Scriptures, but on the Bible in its wholeness.

This idea of comprehension is the modern contribution to ecclesiology. The old method was to search for similarities; the new method is to recognize diversities. The Church's true policy here is not rejection, but adjustment; not insistence, but assistance; not as John, who cried, "Forbid," but as Jesus, who replied, "Welcome." O ye Christian sectarians, ye who are dwelling in dark glens of denominationalism, ye who, like Elijah in his cave, imagine that ye alone are Jehovah's true prophets, ye who live in the hamlet of your sect and "think the rustic cackle of your burg the murmur of the world," come out into the sunlight of God's open country and see how vast is the dome of his own sky.

Comprehension is the irenic policy of Christendom. This is the grand meaning of the Parliament of Religions.

GEORGE DANA BOARDMAN.

[*Pastor First Baptist Church, Philadelphia.*]

CHICAGO, Sept. 24, 1893.

Baptist.

I am in thorough sympathy with the spirit and sentiments of your address. If the great evangelical denominations would act on the principle of comity, it would be an easy matter for them to send an immediate reinforcement of sixteen thousand men to the heathen world, so that there might be one minister to every fifty thousand pagans. One duty, and that of paramount importance, as clear to our minds as if it were written on the heavens in words of fire, is this: that the evangelical churches ought to emphasize strongly all points of doctrinal agreement and all methods of Christian work in which they can unite, presenting a united front to the enemies of God. . . . In such a war as this we are fighting with the combined powers of "the world, the flesh, and the devil." Shall we not, all soldiers of Jesus Christ, stand together in the closest relations possible, help each other heartily on the march and in the deadly assault, cheer each other amid the fire and storm of battle, knowing that the Leader is one, the army one, the foe one, the final triumph one, the eternal glory one—the glory due unto Him who is "worthy to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honor, and blessing"?

GEORGE W. NORTHRUP.

[*In the University of Chicago.*]

CHICAGO, Oct. 14, 1893.

Congregational.

I rejoice to trace in your pamphlet the deep foundation upon which your entire historical superstructure has been reared. Christendom is not one important organization supposed to be invested with supernatural authority and to dominate the conscience or direct the councils and conduct of mankind. . . . Christendom is the *dominion* exercised by Christ over human souls, whatever be the accidental form by which they have been brought into conscious surrender to the living Lord. All who deeply realize their sonship in Christ must, whether they realize it or not, and even in spite of their outspoken repudiation of it, *be* brothers and are one in Christ. A thousand facts go to prove that this solidarity of Christians, this manifestation of the sons of God, is advancing by leaps and bounds. The feeling of brotherhood is stronger than the anathemas or barriers or limitations that apparently endeavor to stem its glorious tide.

I value very much your vindication of the advantages that have compensated the evils of organic divisions, and the noble enumeration of the claims of the separate churches to the gratitude of Christendom, and I am much impressed by the proof you have given that the kindred drops are indeed blending into one on all sides of us. Blood is stronger than water. The spirit is mightier than the letter or the flesh. The true Christendom is united. It has taken millenniums to bring about even a partial belief in the unity of the human race. It may take centuries before Christian believers know that they are one in Christ.

Meanwhile, you have pointed out the one, the only, the spiritual way in which we all may contribute our share to the great consummation. Your brochure, if it be a late fruit of an old tree, is sweet and fragrant and full of the seeds of life and love.

HENRY ROBERT REYNOLDS.
[*President Cheshunt College.*]

CESHUNT COLLEGE, ENGLAND, October, 1893.

Congregational.

Dr. Schaff says in his admirable essay that "dead orthodoxy is as bad as heresy, or even worse." General Armstrong says, with no less sententiousness, "Cantankerousness is worse than heresy." These are two contrasted evils. Dead orthodoxy is, as Dr. Schaff says, with a certain touch of Hibernicism, "a sterile mother." It produces no denominations, while

cantankerousness, which may be conscientiousness gone mad, is responsible for nearly every division of Christendom.

Dr. Schaff tells us that "denominationalism is a blessing; sectarianism is a curse." The latter statement is true, but I am not quite sure that the former is true. It would be true if the multiplication of denominations were the necessary result of freedom and activity of thought. Free active thought, plus intolerance, means sects; and their poisonous atmosphere is sectarianism. But thought may be free and active without intolerance, and without the production of sects or denominations. The Latin Church has had its periods of active thought with very little division. The Anglican Church is very nearly "a sterile mother," because she has tolerated and not driven out her schools of thought. Among his various "families of denominations" in his classifications Dr. Carroll mentions no Congregational family, simply because in its Christian tolerance Congregationalism has not been a mother of any evangelical sects. Denominations have been necessary chiefly because Christians would not tolerate Christian differences. If now they have begun to learn to tolerate them, that is not merely a reason why they should be affectionate to each other, but why they should as far as possible form organic unions. I think it is chiefly from a fear of hurting the sensitive self-love of the denominations that Dr. Schaff presses the first stage of mutual esteem rather than that of self-effacement by organic union. The example for us now is that of the two great Presbyterian bodies in 1869, or the Canadian Methodists in 1874, or the later union of half a dozen Reformed mission bodies in Japan.

So far from the doctrinal differences being the chief obstacle, they are, within Protestantism, the least. It ought to be easy to unite all Protestant Evangelical denominations in this country into half a dozen bodies; but the chief difficulty will come after that, in the differences in ecclesiastical government. It is my profound conviction that the time is now ripe for the work of ecclesiastical statesmen who will give themselves to carrying out the work for which Dr. Schaff has really laid the foundations—that of uniting our denominations, where possible, by organic union, and, where that is delayed, in the bands of mutual recognition and affection.

I regard Dr. Schaff's "The Reunion of Christendom" as something more than a magnificent dream. It is a noble conception, full of rich suggestions and fruitful hopes, and nowhere more valuable and instructive than in its characterization of the Latin and Oriental churches. The Greek Church and especially the Arminian Church are rapidly becoming

what we would call Protestantized. Our missionaries in Turkey are now carefully reconsidering the question whether they should not cease to work outside of them, and work within them. The Roman Church feels the same influence of the age. It is a very different church here from what it is in South America. I admire Dr. Schaff's last chapter, in which he describes one by one the Greek Church, the Latin Church, and the great divisions of Protestantism, calling each "a glorious church," and looks forward to the large consummated union which shall embrace them all.

WILLIAM HAYES WARD.

[*Editor New York "Independent."*]

NEW YORK, 1893.

Evangelical Union (Prussian).

My own opinion concerning the great question treated by you is not of importance, for I have meditated on the matter too little. So much I am sure of, that with their present organization the Protestant churches can negotiate with no one, for they are now passing through a crisis, and if they come out of it successfully they will assume new forms of life and doctrine. Then we may be able to negotiate.

A. HARNACK.

[*Professor of Church History,
University of Berlin.*]

BERLIN, Oct. 5, 1893.

Lutheran.

In securing the interest and ultimate coöperation of the different forms of Christianity with one another, no more effectual mode can be employed than the comprehensive, thorough, and discriminative study of church history. All the divisions of Christianity are rooted in historical antecedents extending far back into the past. Schemes of Reunion which lose sight of these historical antecedents are necessarily only transient.

Confessional differences are not to be avoided, but to be candidly faced and dispassionately judged in the light of God's Word and their historical development. Systems must be judged negatively as well as positively. We must warn against errors, as well as thankfully recognize the elements

of truth with which they are connected, if we hope for any permanent results from our efforts.

H. E. JACOBS.

[*Professor of Theology, Evangelical
Lutheran Seminary, Philadelphia.*]

MOUNT AIRY, Oct. 16, 1893.

Lutheran.

I heartily assent to the thoughts about Reunion as far as they concern our Protestant denominations, and also the Greek Church, from which I hope, at least, for the best.

On the other hand, so far as concerns the Roman Church I must declare that so far as she stands forth officially as a church must we decline communion with her. For she herself insists upon our absolute exclusion from the communion of Christ and his body, and makes such communion dependent upon a condition which in truth is antichristian, namely, our subjection to her pope, and the subordination of Christ to him.

It is true, you say on page 28, "What if the pope," etc.; but that would mean nothing less than that the pope should no longer be head of the church in the sense hitherto accepted—the infallible, unconditional head of *all* the baptized (compare the words of Pius IX., "Herzog," vol. vii., p. 708), who forfeit Christian communion in case of disobedience to him. Very true; *if* the pope ceases to be the pope he is, and the Roman Church to be the church she is, we may seek communion with her. But as matters are, we may seek communion only with her individual members, who are not altogether conscious of the principle of their church, which excludes us from communion with them, and whose hearts are open to the operation of the pure Word of God. And we must fear withal in regard to them that their church will always endeavor to arouse this consciousness, or will make them suffer bitterly for the fraternal relations into which they enter with us.

I must also recall the historical development. This, in the case of all the Protestant denominations, has evidently led to this result, that above all their various peculiarities and the differences by which they are in the opinion of some hopelessly divided, the common Christian and evangelical principle prevailed; while in the case of Roman Catholicism it has led to this result, that more and more unchristian elements and principles developed themselves and forced themselves into view, so that whatever antag-

onized these must be destroyed (as witness the Jansenists and the old Catholics). To that which was glorious in the past of this church her present character is so antagonistic, that until she, as a church, turns right around, I can find no union with her possible. If in America another opinion is held about her in Protestant circles, I can only explain it on the ground that Rome there in its public declarations is more cautious, and holds in the background her demands and her consequences.

J. KÖSTLIN.

[*Professor of Theology, University of Halle.*]

HALLE, Oct. 1, 1893.

Lutheran.

Although I heartily agree with the irenic tendency of your pamphlet, "The Reunion of Christendom," and although I regard as altogether true its fundamental thought, which you develop with brilliant comprehensiveness, namely, the thought that the march of time has already brought with it an approach of the Christian churches one to another, especially of the Protestant churches, and will bring it in an increasing degree, still I am not able to identify my views about the subject entirely with yours.

The Church of Christ has never been externally a unit, and, in my opinion, never will be, so long as the earth remains. On the other hand, the belief that all true Christians form a *societas fidei* is older than all external churchdom. It exists to-day in spite of all divisions, and can be held the more easily just because of the increase in the number of the denominations. An external unity in the creeds is, as I believe, of very little worth. Of what significance is the common acceptance of the Apostles' Creed between us and Rome? Has not the Apostles' Creed ceased to be an official church creed in Switzerland? And do we not stand nearer to many Protestant Christians who do not subscribe to the Apostles' Creed in all details than we do to its Roman champions?

A unity in certain particulars is, it is true, most urgently to be desired—as, for example, an understanding about the divisions of missionary territory—and this will be realized more and more just in the degree in which theology and experience teach Protestant Christians that it is the soul's trust in Christ alone which makes the Christian. The Roman Church, as such, it is true, will not enter into any such union. Just as certainly as I believe that there are even under the pope genuine Christians—Christians who belong to the *Una Sancta Ecclesia*—am I convinced

that Rome, yea, that the pope, is the most formidable obstacle in the way of an external union of all Christendom, even in the most modest degree.

Yea, it is just in connection with the thought developed by you that it is proved that, in spite of its untenableness, the opinion of our fathers contains an important truth that the pope was Antichrist.

F. LOOFS.

[*Professor of Church History
in the University of Halle.*]

HALLE, Oct. 24, 1893.

Methodist Episcopal.

I am very much obliged to you for the pamphlet on "The Reunion of Christendom." For completeness of statement and breadth of view I regard it unsurpassed. It covers the whole ground. I would suggest no change but one, and that is a fuller treatment of the different parts; but I know your limitations prevented this.

JOHN F. HURST.

[*Bishop.*]

WASHINGTON, Oct. 10, 1893.

Presbyterian.

Your paper on "The Reunion of Christendom" was one of the great events of the Parliament. How strong and constant are the forces, "sure as the sun, medicinal as light," which are sweetening and widening men's thoughts and feelings and drawing human hearts together! We are all in the gulf-stream of divine influences. The power that draws our civilization nearer to Christ is drawing Christian hearts closer to each other. How heart-breaking are the alienations of the past! How heart-lifting are the strong Christian fraternities of the present! Reunion will not be the work of ecclesiastical mechanics; it will be the work of the Divine Poet, God himself, who is breathing over his church and evoking harmonies that have always slumbered there.

Since the Parliament of Religions has proved that for seventeen days Christians, Jews, Mohanmedans, Buddhists, Confucians, Parsees, Brahmans, Jains, Taoists, and Shintoists may fraternally meet in peaceful conference, Christians should be more than ever ashamed of foolish and selfish and wicked separations, the legacies of darker times. No petty getting together of little Protestant sects will satisfy the world-wide cravings for Christian unity. The problem that is now to be solved is one

that concerns all the great churches, and the Spirit of Him who prayed for the oneness of his disciples will continue working until He has subdued—by love, by enlightenment, by setting before regenerate minds the sin and weakness of schisms—*all things unto himself.*

JOHN HENRY BARROWS.

[*Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Chicago.*]

CHICAGO, ILL., September, 1893.

Presbyterian.

I have great confidence in the ultimate accomplishment of the ideal of Christendom as expressed in the prayer of our Lord and in the teachings of the apostles. The existing unity is vastly greater than any one could suppose, if he limited his attention to the superficial discord of Christendom. The concord of Christendom is not on the surface, but it is in the foundations and in the greater part of the structure of historical Christianity. . . . The Reunion of Christendom, in my opinion, means something more than voluntary associations or confederations. . . .

I beg leave to take a more hopeful view of the quadrilateral of the Lambeth Conference. As you say, the only serious difficulty is the "historic episcopate." But if the "historic episcopate" means nothing more than the historic institution stripped of all theories as to the origin and meaning of that institution, so that every man may have his own theory of institution, so long as he is willing to hold to the institution—and this is what this phrase means according to the best Episcopal authorities—if, furthermore, Presbyterians and Congregationalists have abandoned the theories of the divine right of their forms of church government, and are willing to adopt that form of church government which has the best historic right and the best practical value, then it seems to me there ought to be no serious difficulty in the "historic episcopate," especially as it is distinctly proposed that it should be "*locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of his church.*"

For a locally adapted episcopate would remove from it all these excrecences, which were so objectionable to our Puritan, Reformed, and Lutheran sires; it would not only reduce it to the form of synodical government, which was advocated by Archbishop Ussher in the seventeenth century, and which was acceptable to the Presbyterians of that period,

but it would still further reduce it so as to assume whatever is of essential importance in the other existing forms of church government, and so realize the idea of Richard Baxter, "Select out of all three the best part, and leave the worst," and so obtain "the most desirable (and ancient) form of government." The "historic episcopate," reduced to its simplest dimensions as an institution, is the contribution of the Episcopal churches to the final form of Christianity. It cannot be further reduced without abandoning the Episcopal form of government altogether. Presbyterians and Congregationalists should vie with the Episcopalians in reducing Presbyterianism and Congregationalism to their last analysis and their essential elements in order to the Reunion of Christendom. . . .

The Reunion of Christendom will come through a great variety of constraining influences. So far as possible, the ecclesiastical organizations should remove their fences and barriers and invite to Reunion. If I am not mistaken, the greater portion of these fences and barriers consist of matters not regarded as of any essential importance in the organizations which have erected them. Many of them are antiquated manners and customs, which would have been removed long ago were it not for a hesitation to destroy venerated traditions. But no traditions, however venerable, no customs, however ancient, no matters of ritual, canon, or doctrine, however important, should obstruct the Reunion of Christendom and the attainment of the supreme ideal of Christ's church, unless it be essential to the existence or welfare of that church. This principle will ere long be adopted as a working principle, and its influence will be irresistible in leading on to church unity. . . .

It is necessary that the essential things should be limited to the great verities in which all the great historic churches are in concord. Every denomination should follow the wise example of the Lambeth Conference and invite all others to union on the basis of this principle. In time something of this sort will be done. The mother-churches will one after another remove the bans which excluded the daughters from the ancestral home, and invite them to return without any other conditions than the common catholic faith and practice of the historic churches relieved of all impediments. The daughters will not be able to resist the invitation. The genealogical principle will work with irresistible power, and modern ecclesiastical organizations will ultimately be absorbed in the most ancient organizations after they have been reformed, purified, and sanctified. And so the Church of Christ will renew her youth and her virgin vigor,

and a reunited Christendom will speedily reconcile the world to Christ, and the bridegroom will rejoice in his sanctified, beautified, and glorified bride.

C. A. BRIGGS.

[*Professor of Biblical Literature,
Union Theological Seminary.*]

NEW YORK, Oct. 18, 1893.

Presbyterian.

I have for years felt most deeply on this subject. The revelation of the last census moved me to preach a series of sermons, afterward printed, under the title of "Denominationalism." The sole point in which I feel constrained to differ from you is that I am unable to accord with all you say in praise of denominations (pp. 8-12). The many sounds in harmony and the many flowers in a garden do not fight each other, but strive together for a common end of beauty and utility.

On the other hand, the wastefulness in money and men of denominationalism is only excelled by the harm that sharp and too often unchristian competition does to the cause of Christ in the eyes of the world.

You have pointed out most clearly the historical path toward Reunion, and no one can fail to see its beauty and practicability. It must attract every student of history. Meanwhile, what can pastors do to promote what it seems to me must be the greatest work of the new century, now so near?

1. We must realize ourselves the vast evils of present divisions, and try to make our congregations realize them. . . . 2. Be Christians first and sectarians second. 3. Cherish and cultivate a charity that will not think less of others' sincerity and piety because they differ from us in opinion. 4. We must be willing to see the cause of Christ grow, even, if need be, at the cost of loss to our own denomination. 5. Mingle more freely with Christians of other names. Acquaintance will soon convince us that they are equally loyal disciples with ourselves of our common Lord.

TEUNIS S. HAMLIN.

[*Pastor Church of the Covenant, Washington.*]

WASHINGTON, Sept. 20, 1893.

Presbyterian.

I thank you heartily for the paper on "The Reunion of Christendom," not merely for its catholic spirit, which characterizes all your public utter-

ances, but also for its comprehensive survey of the whole ecclesiastical situation. Such a survey is much needed, in order to bring before us all the state of the great problem; and no one could be more competent for such a survey than the author of the "Church History" and of "The Creeds of Christendom." If the survey suggests a formidable array of difficulties in the question, yet I cannot see that you have overstated them. Certainly nothing would be gained by ignoring or slighting them. They must be frankly met, and adjusted with Christian charity and wisdom.

I am glad that you advocate a "Reunion of Christendom," as if implying that its existing churches or ecclesiastical elements should be recombined in one harmonious system. For this purpose I would attach great importance to the Chicago-Lambeth proposals, especially the "historic episcopate." For the first time in the history of the church that episcopate is presented as a unifying bond among Christian bodies which it has hitherto repelled as sects and outcasts. As never before, it may now be accepted on the Presbyterian theory as well as on the prelatic theory of the Christian ministry. Neither theory should exclude the other. In the one Apostolic Church differences in doctrine and ritual were allowed without the unchristian results of schism and sectarianism. Taking Christendom as it now is and has been for centuries past, I do not see how its Reunion is to be effected without the "historic episcopate." It is tenaciously held by four fifths of the Christian world, and shows a capacity for embracing the remaining fifth within its scope. Not only does it prevail throughout the great historic churches, but, in this country at least, it involves the Presbyterian and Congregational systems of the Protestant churches, and is thus fitted to become the keystone of a reunited Christendom.

I ought to add that I have here assumed Christian unity as an already accomplished fact and condition precedent to church unity. The real problem is, how to express the Christian unity of the churches in an ecclesiastical unity, which shall represent the body of Christ as no longer mutilated and distracted, but with its various members in conscious harmony and normal exercise.

CHARLES W. SHIELDS.

[*Professor in the College of New Jersey, Princeton.*]

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY, Sept. 20, 1893.

Protestant Episcopal.

The great pressure of my engagements, preparatory to my departure on Saturday next for Genoa, has made it impossible for me to comply with your request.

I differ from you, I fear, since I hold that the Reunion of Christendom must be along organic rather than sentimental lines, and marked by a large tolerance rather than by precise dogmatic terms.

The Apostles' Creed and the primitive church government as indicated by you, as universal A.D. 200, will have to be sufficient for the people.

H. C. POTTER.

[*Bishop of New York.*]

NEW YORK, Oct. 17, 1893.

Protestant Episcopal.

We used to hear a great deal said about the advantages and desirableness of the divisions of Christendom, as stimulating a "wholesome competition" and provoking "unto love and good works." We hear next to nothing of all this now. Bitter experience has proved that the stimulus is to unwholesome rivalry instead of wholesome competition, and that the provocation is far more to "wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking" than to "love and good works." There is a widespread feeling that unity among those who name "the Name which is above every name" is not only a necessity for the full life of the church itself, but a prerequisite, also, for the conversion of the world. . . .

Whenever that organic unity, which the church lost because of sin, shall be restored, it will be at a time unexpected by men, and by methods other than those which men have contrived. Yet much can be done by every one of us. We can avoid that hard, narrow, and really Donatistic temper which is sometimes taken for churchmanship. We can recognize truth and goodness wherever they are, and in devout thankfulness to God recognize them as the fruit of the Holy Spirit. . . .

In the next place, there are many occasions, opportunities, and undertakings in which the members of different Christian bodies can meet and work together, and in this intercourse and interchange learn to know each other better, and to get rid of a thousand prejudices and false judgments.

Above all, there is that mightiest weapon, which all of us can wield— instant, honest, earnest prayer. Had there been less planning and more

praying, we should, I fully believe, be in far better case than we are now. Suppose, for instance, that on every Thursday that beautiful and comprehensive collect for unity, which will, I trust, soon be found in our own prayer-book, had been used in private devotions, at family worship, and in public services, who can estimate the results that might have followed? We should have had, no doubt, fewer elaborate essays, fewer proposed panaceas, but we should assuredly have had in their place something vastly better and more effective.

J. WILLIAMS.

[*Bishop of Connecticut.*]

MIDDLETOWN, CONN., September, 1893.

Protestant Episcopal.

I take pleasure in acknowledging my agreement with your paper on "The Reunion of Christendom." . . .

My own feeling and observation incline me to believe that the sentiment which calls for the unity of the church is a growing one, and destined further to increase because it is rooted in deep wants of the age, as also because it is in harmony with the motives which are now influencing our deeper thought and activities. . . . If, since the Protestant Reformation, individualism in religion seems to have gone so far as to threaten disintegration while it still clings to its prerogative, even at the expense of still further dividing Christendom, it is well to recall the long régime of the so-called Catholic ages, when individualism found no expression, when humanity was making such immense sacrifices to maintain an approximate unity in the church. The place of individualism in the church must be guaranteed beyond the possibility of loss or danger before any scheme of unity can prevail. The fear that this will not be done still hinders many from giving their cordial support to the growing sentiment, and perhaps is the greatest obstacle to be overcome.

I agree with you that the scientific, non-partisan study of church history is one of the most important means for the realization of Christian unity and is already bearing fruit. To this end is contributing the profounder investigation of the origins of Christianity. . . . But the differences which divide the churches still go deeper than any mere historical treatment can reach, unless it be accompanied by a profound insight into the heart of our common humanity, and sympathy with its deeper moods. For the most persistent of these divisions reach back in the last analysis to the absorbing question of the ground of religious certitude.

Here lies the motive which has given rise to the great attitudes which now divide the Christian world. Among them are: 1. The doctrine of apostolic succession—the sole guarantee of the faith; 2. The doctrine of papal infallibility; 3. The infallibility of the text of Scripture by means of verbal inspiration; 4. Another principle, not so easily stated, but which animates the large Baptist communion and finds its logical sequence in the Seventh-Day Baptists. If there is any common solvent for these assumptions upon which the divisions of Christendom rest, may we not look for it in the great and inspiring motive which underlies the higher criticism, whose final aim is to trace the actual objective method of the divine revelation? For these theories, above mentioned, are content with affirming the fact of a revelation, while stifling inquiry as to its true method. Indeed, the very attempt to do so seems to many as unjustifiable or impious as were thought to be the first efforts to inquire into the ways of God in the world of external nature, when natural science took its rise in the age of the Renaissance. . . .

It seems clear that none of the ecclesiastical arrangements of other ages is large enough for the comprehensive, richer life of the church of the future, just as no one of them is large enough to include the full life of the churches to-day. Some common impulse acting upon all the churches alike is capable of becoming a bond of unity, or of taking shape in some institutional form, which shall be the universal surprise of Christian souls. Have we not the hint or germ of some such coming motive in the growing recognition of the person of Christ as in himself the power of God unto salvation? His attractive spell it is which constitutes the real church, the kingdom of God among men. Those who know him know each other, and make at once a holy and organic brotherhood. This is the reality, which now at last we demand, without which all else is hollow.

ALEXANDER V. G. ALLEN.

[*Professor Harvard Episcopal Divinity School.*]

CAMBRIDGE, MASS., September, 1893.

Protestant Episcopal.

I do not think that a divided Christendom has been an unmixed evil in the past. Neither do I believe that it is so now. It has had the effect to bring out the many-sidedness of the Christian religion, and to give us a larger conception of Christ as apprehended from different points of view.

It would seem, however, as though the time had come for an adjust-

ment of these differences, and I agree with you in thinking that a reunion of the churches for benevolent and missionary work at home and abroad is more likely to be effected by a federation than by any attempt, at present, at organic unity. Let each church or ecclesiastical organization maintain its distinctiveness, and at the same time be sufficiently broad and catholic in spirit as to recognize the value of the other churches, and to coöperate with them in the great work of evangelizing the world.

DAVID H. GREER.

[*Rector of St. Bartholomew's.*]

NEW YORK, Sept. 26, 1893.

Reformed (German, in the United States).

My opinion is that the narrow spirit of sect still has a firm hold on a large majority of Christian people. The great truth that, as there is but one Lord, one faith, one baptism, so there is but one Christianity, one church catholic, seems not to be believed, or, if admitted in theory, it is not felt, and does not perceptibly govern practice.

The obstacle to the reunion of Christendom is not the fact that varying types of Christianity have developed in the form of distinct organizations, but the lack of devotion to Jesus Christ and of genuine fraternal love. Such love sees in every historical organization a living branch of the one church, and in every faithful Christian a member of Christ. The command "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" is above all applicable in this age to the rival denominations of Protestantism.

Efforts to heal divisions should be mainly directed toward quickening the recognition of Jesus Christ as the only living center of practical religion, of ecclesiastical fellowship, and of theological thought. In the degree that he, the glorified Mediator, not tradition, not a form of church government, not the name of an honored Reformer, not a mode of baptism, has the devotion and rules the labors of his people, we shall be approaching the day when Christendom will be one body, consisting of many members, keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

I distinguish between the "divisions of Christendom" and *different forms* of ecclesiastical organization. The former involve party spirit, animosity, strife, and are censured by St. Paul in 1 Cor. i. 13. The latter are an inward necessity growing out of the human constitution and of historical circumstances, and are illustrated by the same Apostle in the

same epistle, twelfth chapter, under the image of the body with its many members. An attempt to abolish ecclesiastical organizations by an external application of some method of unification would be likely to increase the evils of division.

Of the three kinds of union which you have clearly represented—individual, federal, and organic—each has a place in the general adjustment of existing separations. But I concur in the judgment that for the Protestant part of Christendom wisdom dictates that each Family aim at a confederate union of all its branches, such as was proposed two years ago by the German and Dutch Reformed churches of this country. . . . If endeavors toward effecting federal unions of this nature are now unadvisable, or if party spirit succeeds in turning such efforts into failure, I know of no alternative but to pray and labor toward the more general recognition of Jesus Christ glorified as the only head and law of every organized body of Christians. In so far as this fundamental truth gains controlling power in the hearts of believers, all lines of separation will lose their divisive force.

E. V. GERHART.

[*Professor of Theology, Lancaster, Pa.*]

LANCASTER, Oct. 12, 1893.

Reformed (Swiss).

It is magnificent, it is startling! This is the exclamation with which I rise from the perusal of your paper, read at the Council in Chicago. Yes, it strengthens the heart and gladdens one's faith to thus contemplate the work of God in its numerous ramifications and in spite of the modifications to which human instruments have subjected it. And every one of your readers will join with you in the sentiments of adoration in the words of St. Paul with which you close this beautiful work.

Thanks that you should have given it to the church. Thanks that you should have sent it to me. Your optimism goes far when you picture to yourself the pope using his infallibility for proclaiming his fallibility in a certain sense and beyond a certain domain. You also go quite far in recognizing claims to praise in certain denominations. But it is not possible to escape from the current of optimism and universality with which you impress the heart of the reader, who would like to join with you in saluting in advance the work of the twentieth century. For the time and in the face of the future, which is *so very near*, I must confess that I am

profoundly a pessimist, and that I see the gathering typhoon which will sweep over the church. But it may be that out of this ruin a saved church will come forth rejuvenated and unified, as you hope.

FRÉDÉRIC GODET.

[*Professor of Theology, Neuchatel.*]

NEUCHATEL, Oct. 2, 1893.

Reformed (Swiss).

I am fully at one with you in all the essential points of your address, and have only two remarks to add. First, in regard to the place to be assigned to the confessions in a union of the churches. A union will be upon the basis of emphasizing, with all possible positiveness, that which is common to all churches, the essential content of their faith. At the same time, all of the churches must have liberty to use in their own services and Christian instruction the confessions through which their existence as churches was obtained. Otherwise we would have to look forward with the expectation of seeing the faith which is common to all again analyzed and stated in various creeds, leading to new divisions of the general body. Each must have the right to preserve individual traits, or a union will be of temporary and uncertain existence.

My second criticism does not refer to the theme you have treated so much as to the occasion which enabled you to discuss it. I can fully understand the meaning of a convention of Christians of all denominations, and regard the appointment of such a meeting as natural, desirable, and full of promise.

But the meaning and purpose of a convention of adherents of all "religions," hence, too, of non-Christians, such as was called at Chicago, is to me simply incomprehensible.

It surely cannot be expected that the Mohammedan, heathen, and fetish-worshipping members of such a convention will immediately consent to be converted to Christ; but any other result of the convention is equivalent to a defeat, so far as external appearances go, for Christinity.

But I suppose that your paper is by no means intended for this gathering, but rather for the assembly of Christian churches of all denominations, and so far I agree with its spirit and aims.

GEORG VON WYSS.

[*Professor of History, Zürich.*]

ZÜRICH, Oct. 16, 1893.

Roman Catholic.

I have read your paper with profound sympathy. I am sure I need not assure you that my heart craves for the realization of the reunion of Christendom, as must every heart that has in it even a little of the spirit that filled the heart of our divine Lord when he prayed to his Father for the perfect oneness of his disciples. It is a question of tremendous importance, because it is not human devising, but divine principles and ordinances, which have to guide and control its solution.

I do not think I can better express my views on the subject than I did in that part of my discourse on the Ultimate Religion, delivered in the Parliament of Religions, which concerns this point, and is as follows :

The wondrous message Jesus Christ sent "to every creature," proclaiming, as it had never been proclaimed before, the value and the rights of each individual soul, the sublimest individualism the world has ever heard of. And then, with the heavenly balance and equilibrium which brings all individualities into order and harmony and unity, he calls all to be sheep and of one fold, branches of one vine, members of one body, in which all, while members of one head, are also "members one of another," in which is the fulfillment of his own sublime prayer and prophecy : "That all may be one, as thou, Father, in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that they may be made perfect in one."

Thus he makes his church a perfect society, both human and divine ; on its human side, the most perfect multiplicity in unity, and unity in multiplicity, the most perfect socialism and solidarity that the world could ever know ; on its divine side, the instrumentality devised by the Savior of the world for imparting, maintaining, and operating the action of the divine life in each soul ; in its entirety, the body, the vine, both divine and human, a living organism, imparting the life of God to humanity. This is the way in which the Church of Christ is presented to us by the apostles and by our Lord himself. It is a concrete individuality, as distinct and unmistakable as himself. It is no mere aggregation, no mere coöperation or confederation of distinct bodies ; it is an organic unity, it is the body of Christ, our means of being ingrafted in him and sharing in his life.

This is unmistakably his provision for the sanctification of the world. Will any one venture to devise a substitute for it? Will any one, in the face of this clear and imperative teaching of our Lord, assert that any separated branch may choose to live apart by itself, or that any aggregation of separated branches may do instead of the organic duty of the vine, of the body?

Men of impetuous earnestness have embodied good and noble ideas in separate organizations of their own. They were right in the ideas; they were wrong in the separation. On the human side of the Church of Christ, as there will always be, as there always has been, room for improvement; room for the elimination of human evil, since our Lord has given no promise of human impeccability; room for the admission and application of every human excellence; room for the employment and the ordering of every human energy in every work that is for God's glory and man's welfare; room not only for individual beings, but for strong, majestic branches and limbs innumerable; but all in the organic unity of the one vine, the one body. For, on the divine side, there can be "no change nor shadow of alteration," and the living organism of the vine of the body must ever maintain its individual identity, just as a living human being, though ever subject to life's vicissitudes, is ever the same identical self.

Jesus Christ is the ultimate center of religion. He has declared that his one organic church is equally ultimate. Because I believe him, here must be my stand forever.

JOHN J. KEANE.

[*Bishop and Rector of the Catholic University of America.*]

WASHINGTON, Oct. 16, 1893.

I have read with intense interest your admirable address on "The Reunion of Christendom." It is very able, very catholic, and I indorse it from beginning to end.

It is a very charming thing that you have had strength and courage given you to write so wise and useful an article, and I hope you will live to see this kind of spirit in the universal church.

W. E. DODGE.

[*President of the Evangelical Alliance for the United States.*]

NEW YORK, Sept. 22, 1893.

The Reunion of Christendom is to be prayed for, labored for, and expected. It cannot be accomplished, however, as long as any church makes exclusive claims to legitimacy of organization or of orders. All churches, therefore, which make such claims are obstacles to Reunion,

and will continue such until they have undergone changes, which in the case of the Greek and Latin churches must be nothing less radical than regeneration.

This means that Reunion is many generations, if not many centuries, yet in the future. But though this consummation is remote in time, we may nevertheless labor for it intelligently, and so hasten its coming. It seems to me that the several means of promoting Christian union which you suggest (pp. 38-40) should all be emphasized, and especially coöperation, which will facilitate acquaintance and thus cultivate confidence and Christian fellowship. As long as coöperation is impracticable, organic union will remain impossible. If we cannot accomplish the less, we need not hope for the greater. Churches which cannot coöperate cannot coalesce.

You speak of three kinds of Christian union (pp. 14, 15), the second of which is "federal or confederate union." You go on to show that by this you mean a confederation of denominations, effected through the highest ecclesiastical authority of the several bodies. This might be called federation *at the top*. Is there not another form of federation which is both more desirable and more feasible, and which may yet furnish the key to the great problem of organic union? I refer to the federation of local churches—the bringing of the churches of the same city into coöperative and at length organic relations. This we may call federation *at the bottom*.

The churches of the same community, being charged with its Christianization, having the same great aims, holding essentially the same doctrines, enjoying the same opportunities, contending against the same obstacles, have much more in common with each other than with churches hundreds or thousands of miles away, with which the only distinctive bond is a denominational name, a non-essential doctrine, a common form of government or of ritual. The sooner the churches of every community discover this and effect *federation at the bottom*, the sooner will they take the first great step toward organic union, and, what is still more important, the sooner will they accomplish their mission both to the individual and to society.

We read of the seven churches of Asia, but of only one church in Ephesus, one in Smyrna, one in Pergamos, and the like. There may have been several worshiping congregations in each city, but there was only one church in each. When the time comes that, after the manner of Scripture, we may say the church which is in New York, the church which

is in London, the church which is in Berlin, the Reunion of Christendom will not be long delayed. And it does not seem unreasonable to me to hope that the Protestant municipal church will appear before many generations.

JOSIAH STRONG.

[*General Secretary of the Evangelical
Alliance for the United States.*]

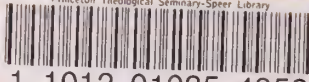
NEW YORK, 1893.

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